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The NEBLINE, March 2009

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The NEBLINE

March 2009

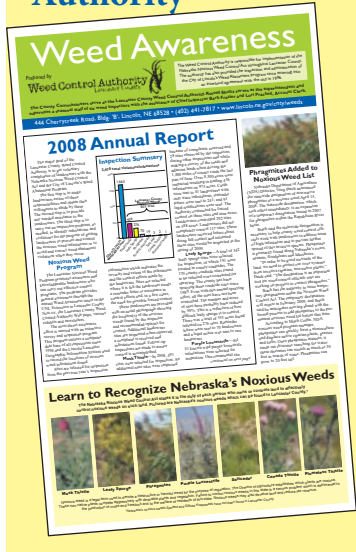
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Special Pullout Section

WEED AWARENESS
Prepared by the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority



4-H Embryology

More Than Just a Science Project!

Soni Cochran and Marty Cruickshank
UNL Extension Associates

Nearly 3,900 third graders in 165 classrooms in 52 schools in Lancaster County know exactly what time of year it is! It's time to hatch eggs in their classrooms as part of the exciting school enrichment project 4-H Embryology.

UNL Extension in Lancaster County has been bringing 4-H Embryology to local classrooms for over 30 years. Along the way, the program has adapted to make sure the curriculum meets state science standards, continues to be updated with current research and has stayed on top of technology. But learning about how life begins, the



Extension Associate Marty Cruickshank (right) candlers eggs in Lancaster County classrooms as part of the 4-H Embryology School Enrichment program.

process of hatching eggs and caring for chickens hasn't changed.

It is a shared experience for thousands of children. The 4-H Embryology program

continues to be one of the most memorable, hands-on learning experiences for both students and teachers. Many teachers have creatively used math, poetry, art and music to reinforce science-based concepts.

Marty Cruickshank, 4-H Extension Associate coordinates the scheduling of classrooms, supplies and staff to help make deliveries and presentations. She works with Richard Earl from the Lincoln Northeast Kiwanis who picks up the fertilized eggs from a hatchery in Spencer, Iowa. Earl works closely with the hatchery who donates the eggs so he can supply the 4-H Embryology project. Due to the number of schools, three sessions are scheduled each spring so all



After about 21 days of incubation, chicks begin to break through the shell (called pipping). It usually takes several hours for chicks to break out of their shells.



By holding a fertile egg up to a light (called candling), students can see how the embryos are growing. Pictured above is a chicken embryo after incubating seven days.

third grade classrooms can participate in the project.

When extension staff enter into the classroom for the first presentation, the atmosphere is electric. Students can not wait to start their embryology project. In this first visit, students learn about the study of embryos (embryology), where the eggs come from, the parts of an egg like the "germ spot", the difference between fertile eggs and eggs in the grocery store and how the students will need to care for their eggs. The eggs are then set in the incubators. Once the eggs are set, the children take full responsibility for the care of the eggs. They turn the eggs, rotate the eggs, keep them warm and keep humidity in the incubator.

One week later, extension staff return to the classrooms where students review what they've been doing to take care of the eggs. Students learn more about how the embryos develop in an egg, how chicks hatch and tips on caring for the chicks after they hatch. The eggs are then candled in the classroom.

see *EMBRYOLOGY* on page 12

New this Year! 4-H EGG Cam features a live streaming view!

The 4-H Embryology Web site at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/embryology> features resources on incubation, candling and caring for poultry. You'll also find educational photos, amazing video clips and 4-H EGG Cam.

What is 4-H EGG Cam? In 2002, UNL Extension in Lancaster County set up a Web cam and directed the view into an incubator. It was an instant hit! In five years, nearly 1 million hits were recorded on 4-H EGG Cam and the office could barely keep up with the traffic to the site especially when birds were hatching. People from all around the world have tuned in. Classrooms, child care centers, home school families and poultry enthusiasts of all ages follow the progress of the eggs, watch the chicks hatch and then enjoy the birds on camera.

4-H EGG Cam now features a live streaming view. The UNL Communications & Technology department has been providing technical support for the project to help make this new view possible and help the office better manage traffic to the site. The community has also been supportive of the live streaming project. 4-H EGG Cam is available live 24/7 from January to early summer. Check it out at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/eggcam>

There's also a **4-H EGG Cam Fan Page on Facebook**. Become a Fan-Join us. You can take part in discussions, get the latest info on hatchings, upcoming events, post to the Wall and so much more. It's free and fun! Learn more at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/eggcam>

Thank You

There are many people and organizations who help support the 4-H Embryology program. Thank you!

- **Richard Earl** of the **Lincoln Northeast Kiwanis Club** for picking up the fertilized eggs from Hy-Line Poultry Farms in Spencer, Iowa (which donates the eggs for this project)
- **Lincoln Northeast Kiwanis Club** for donating \$400 to support equipment for the live streaming video
- **Willie Strickland** and the folks at **GQF Manufacturing Company** in Savannah, Georgia for creating a special lid for the Hova Bator incubator on 4-H EGG Cam
- **Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & EGG Division** for supporting Lancaster County 4-H Embryology with incubators for local classrooms and 4-H EGG Cam
- **Hy-Line/Hy-Vac** for providing the Embryo Development posters for classrooms
- Faculty, staff and support folks at:
 - **University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension**
 - **UNL Extension in Lancaster County**
 - **UNL Communications & Information Technology** for everything from setting up the camera, taking care of the incubators, caring for the chicks to helping us get live stream video this year for the viewers of 4-H EGG Cam.



Richard Earl of Lincoln Northeast Kiwanis Club

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How to Account for Differences in Moisture Content in Commodities

Tom Dorn

UNL Extension Educator

One of the frequent questions I receive at the extension office involves converting the weight of a product at one moisture content to what it would weigh at a different moisture content.

Example 1: A corn producer has delivered a semi load of corn at 16.7% moisture to a cattle feedlot. The net weight of corn is 33,420 pounds. The cattle feeder has agreed to take only a moisture shrink to 15.5%, but no drying shrink since this corn will be steamed and flaked before feeding. How many bushels should the corn producer be paid for?

Converting the weight from one moisture content to another requires a two-step mathematical process.

Step 1. Calculate the pounds of dry matter (weight at 0% moisture) of the original product.

From the moisture meter reading, we know 16.7% of the weight of the corn is water.

Stated differently, we know $100\% - 16.7\% = 83.3\%$ of the corn

delivered is dry matter.

To calculate the pounds of corn dry matter on the truck, multiply the net pounds of product by the percentage dry matter in the product. $33,420 \times 0.833 = 27,839$ pounds of dry matter.

Step 2. A standard bushel of #2 corn weighs 56 pounds at 15.5% moisture. Calculate the pounds of corn at standard moisture content (15.5% moisture).

Corn at 15.5% moisture content has: $100\% - 15.5\% \text{ moisture} = 84.5\%$ dry matter.

By dividing the pounds of dry matter from Step 1 by the dry matter content of standard corn, we can compute how much this load of corn would weigh at standard moisture.

$27,839 \text{ pounds dry matter} \div 0.845 \text{ dry matter} = 32,945 \text{ pounds of corn at } 15.5\% \text{ moisture.}$

The producer should be paid for 32,945 pounds \div 56 pounds per bushel = 588.3 bushels.

Example 2: The elevator will pay for soybeans up to 13% moisture based on 60 pounds per bushel but will impose a moisture dock over 13%.

Lets look at case of a producer whose soybeans dried down so rapidly,

one 125 acre field of soybeans tested 9% moisture when delivered to the elevator.

The total weight of soybeans delivered from this field was 386,250 pounds, so the farmer was paid for 386,250 pounds \div 60 pounds per bushel = 6,437.5 bushels. At \$9.66 per bushel, how much less money did this farmer receive compared to what they would have been paid had they been able to harvest this field at 13% moisture?

Step 1. 9% of the weight of the soybeans was water. The dry matter delivered was $100\% - 9\% = 0.91 \times 386,250 \text{ pounds} = 351,488 \text{ pounds of dry matter.}$

Step 2. If the beans had been 13% moisture, (100% - 13% = 87% dry matter), the weight delivered would have been $351,488 \text{ pounds of dry matter} \div 0.87 = 404,009 \text{ pounds of soybeans.}$

If the beans would have been 13% moisture, the producer would have been paid for 404,009 pounds \div 60 pounds per bushel = 6,733.5 bushels.

The monetary loss on this field resulting from delivering 9% moisture soybeans instead of 13% moisture soybeans was $6,733.5 - 6,437.5 \text{ bushels} = 296 \text{ bushels} \times \$9.66 \text{ per bushel} = \$2,859.$

Example 3: Tom and Bill both have hay for sale.

Tom has freshly-baled hay at 21% moisture which he has priced at \$90 per ton.

Bill allowed his hay to dry more in the windrow before baling. This hay is 14% moisture. He is asking \$95 per ton.

Assuming both products have the same nutrient content analysis on a dry-matter basis, whose hay is the better buy?

Step 1. Tom's hay is $100\% - 21\% \text{ moisture} = 79\%$ dry matter. A ton of this hay has 2,000 pounds per ton $\times 0.79 = 1,580 \text{ pounds of dry matter per ton.}$

Step 2. Each ton Tom's hay if converted to 14% moisture (86% dry matter) like Bill's hay, would weigh $1,580 \text{ pounds} \div 0.86 = 1,837 \text{ pounds (163 pounds less than Bill's hay at the same moisture content).}$

The price per ton of Tom's hay, if corrected to 14% moisture, is actually $(2,000 \div 1,837) \times \$90 = \$98 \text{ per ton}$

On an equal moisture content basis, we find Bill's hay at \$95 per ton is a slightly better bargain than Tom's hay at \$90 per ton.

WINNING THE GAME™

Marketing Workshop, Feb. 27

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension will present a "Winning the Game" Marketing Workshop Friday, Feb. 27 at Horizon Bank, 10841 N. 142 St., Waverly (north side of the tracks). Enter from the west side of the bank and go to the basement. Registration and refreshments begin at 8:15 a.m. The workshop will start promptly at 8:30 a.m. and will conclude by noon.

There is no registration fee because Horizon Bank and the Nebraska Soybean Board is sponsoring the workshop. You do not need to be a Horizon Bank customer to attend.

Have you ever written a concise and practical marketing plan? During this workshop, producers will:

- Learn about the seasonal price trends in grain.
- Examine the key elements of a solid marketing plan.
- Learn about the role of crop insurance, target dates, target prices and "trump cards" in a marketing plan.
- Test their market planning skills using a marketing game with actual daily market prices from a year in the recent past.

This is one of 35 Winning the Game workshops slated across Nebraska in 2009.

Controlling Winter Annual Brome with Herbicides



Downy brome



Japanese brome

Early weeds like downy brome, cheatgrass and wild oats can be a big problem in pastures. They reduce pasture quality and carrying capacity.

Warm-Season Pastures

In pastures dominated by warm-season grasses, one control option is to spray one pint of glyphosate, like Roundup®, per acre as soon as weedy bromes start to green up in the spring but before warm-season grasses start growing. This will kill most of the downy brome and will knock out other early weeds like bluegrass

without harming warm-season grasses.

Another option is to use 4–6 ounces of Plateau herbicide, which will also provide some residual herbicide activity for later-emerging weeds as well.

Cool-Season Pastures

Weed control in cool-season grass pastures is tougher. Both glyphosate and Plateau harm cool-season grasses. Gramoxone is a better choice, but don't spray until the weedy bromes are about to form seed heads. Gramoxone

will kill all the green top growth it contacts, including weedy bromes. This will eliminate them producing seed this year and your intended grass will start to regrow in two to three weeks.

The seed of these grasses can last several years in the soil, which means you should plan to repeat these treatments for several years. Once you've gotten rid of the weeds, be sure to graze the pasture to maintain the vigor and competitiveness of the desired grasses.

Source: Bruce Anderson, Extension Forage Specialist

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Master Conservationist Entries Due April 1

Nebraska adults and youth in both rural and urban areas who have implemented soil and water conservation practices are eligible to enter the 2009 Master Conservationist Recognition program. The deadline for entries is April 1. There are categories for youth groups and individuals, residences, communities and private businesses as well as production agriculture (farming and ranching). Master Conservationist program brochures are available at the UNL Extension office and online at <http://owh.com> (click on the "In the Community" link).



Canada Geese Populations are Increasing

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Canada geese have been in the news lately and it hasn't been good. While experts haven't officially ruled on the cause, on January 15, 2009, the pilot of US Airways Flight 1549 told air traffic controllers his plane was hit by a double bird strike. Both engines failed, most likely from Canada geese being sucked into the engines during takeoff. The pilot made an amazing landing in the Hudson River. It was a miracle everyone survived.

Most large commercial jet engines include design features so they can shut down after "ingesting" a bird weighing four pounds. These jet engines aren't designed for Canada geese weighing 7–14 pounds. Serious situations occur when there are multiple strikes on twin engine jet aircraft because multiple aircraft systems are disabled. This is what occurred on Flight 1549.

Why Are We Seeing so Many More Canada geese?

Canada geese are native to North America, but by 1900, over-hunting and loss of habitat resulted in a serious decline of their numbers. With improved game laws, habitat recreation and preservation programs, their populations have recovered and are continuing to increase. The North American non-migratory Canada goose population increased from one million birds in 1990 to over 3.5 million in 2007.

Something else has also happened. Canada geese are not staying in rural areas, but are colonizing urban areas. Geese prefer open, nicely manicured and fertilized grassy areas near open water. The open space allows geese to see approaching



Stephen Vantassel, UNL, ICWDM.org

predators. The water provides a quick escape from predators.

If left undisturbed, Canada geese will readily establish nesting territories on ponds in residential yards, golf courses, condominium complexes, city parks or on farms. They feed entirely on readily available plants like grasses, sedges, grain and berries.

Hunting has been the primary means of managing geese populations in rural areas, but in urban areas, geese cannot be hunted (even during hunting season) because it is illegal to discharge firearms within city limits. Inside cities, there aren't many predators to keep geese populations in check.

Some migratory populations of geese are not going as far south in the winter as they used to. In Nebraska, some populations of Canada geese are staying year round, perhaps due to warmer winters.

What Problems do They Cause?

Other than the bird strike problem, there are other reasons why Canada geese are a problem.

Canada geese can be aggressive, especially when they are nesting or protecting their brood. They will charge people and pets and may bite them.

Canada geese produce large droppings. According to Stephen Vantassel, UNL wildlife project coordinator, one goose can produce up to three pounds of droppings each day. Because

geese aggregate, large quantities of droppings can accumulate in nesting and foraging areas.

Geese can do tremendous damage to lawns and landscaping by pulling up and feeding on plants.

What Can be Done?

Canada geese, like most other bird species, are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. It is illegal to harm, take or possess migratory birds, any parts of the bird, their nests or their eggs unless by special permit, granted by Game and Parks. There is a hunting season for Canada geese in Nebraska. Check with Nebraska Game and Parks for details about where and when Canada geese can be legally hunted.

No matter which methods you try, you must respond quickly and you must be persistent. Best results are achieved when you use more than one method at a time:

- **Do not feed geese.** This will encourage geese to stay.
- If you have a pond, **reduce fertilizer use on nearby vegetation.** Fertilized grasses are more nutritious than unfertilized grasses and preferred by geese.
- If you have a pond, **reduce the lawn size.** This minimizes foraging sites for geese.
- **Reduce or eliminate mowing near the pond.** Geese have more difficulty locating new shoots in taller grass (over six inches). Because they like open spaces, geese may be less likely to feel secure when grasses are tall.
- **Vegetative barriers.** Plant tall shrubs, hedges or prairie plants around the water. Plants at least 30 inches tall and 20–30 feet wide impede movement of geese to and from the water. These barrier plantings will need to be protected from geese during establishment.

• **Rock barriers.** Large boulders placed along the shoreline may discourage goose use and access to grazing sites by making it difficult for geese to get out of the water. Their effectiveness is improved when used with vegetative barriers.

• **Fence barriers.** Fences can prevent geese from walking into an area. They should be at least 30 inches tall and have openings no larger than two inches in diameter. Welded wire, chicken wire, picket fencing, plastic show fencing and construction fencing are effective.

• **Hazing.** Noisemaking devices or visual deterrents can be helpful. Disturb the birds *as soon as they arrive* to deter them from settling on the property. Predator silhouettes (effigies) may discourage geese from landing near ponds.

• **Allow legal hunting.**

In rural areas, encourage hunting on your property during the legal hunting season.

• **Use a feeding deterrent/repellent,** like Turf

Shield® or ReJex-iT® AG-36. The active ingredient of these products is methyl anthranilate. It is made from natural, biodegradable, food-grade ingredients (grape extract) and is not toxic to humans, dogs, cats or birds. To be effective, it must be carefully applied so be sure you read and follow label and technical directions. It should be applied to dry and freshly mowed turf when the temperature is above 45 degrees F in full sunlight. Repeat applications may be required. In Nebraska, you don't need a license to apply pest repellents, like methyl anthranilate, but manufacturers/distributors may be unwilling to sell it to someone who isn't a certified applicator. Find out more information about these products by doing an internet search.

Wildlife experts believe Canada geese populations will continue to rise, increasing the interaction between these birds and humans. More intensive control efforts in urban areas may be needed in the future.

Canada Geese Biology Bits

- Male and female Canada geese are similar in appearance, but the male of a mated pair is usually slightly larger. When nesting, the hen will usually be sitting on the nest. The drake will fiercely guard the nest.
- Most pairs of Canada geese mate for life, but a new one will be selected if one dies.
- Canada geese usually breed the first time in their third year, but these young pairs are more likely to be unsuccessful the first time around. First timers may abandon the nest or not protect it from predators.
- As early as the first week of March, Canada geese may start nesting. Females usually nest on the bank near open waters. Their nest is a shallow depression lined with plant material and down.
- Soon after hatching, their parents take them to the safety of water. From their first day, goslings are excellent swimmers and can swim 30–40 feet underwater.
- The mustard-colored goslings eat almost continuously and grow quickly. They can weigh as much as seven pounds after only eight weeks.
- When the young are half grown, their parents molt and lose their old worn-out flight feathers. For about a month, they will be unable to fly. The parents grow new flight feathers by late summer, in time to teach the youngsters how to fly.
- In the wild, many Canada geese live longer than 10 years and some as long as 25 years.

Managing Pocket Gophers

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

Pocket gophers are stocky, burrowing rodents found in Nebraska. They get their name from the "pockets," external fur-lined cheek pouches, where they carry food or bedding material to their underground nests.

These industrious animals are well-adapted to living below the ground. Pocket gophers have large incisors for gnawing on roots and powerful front shoulders and long claws for digging. Pocket gophers can excavate and transport nearly 50 wheelbarrows of soil per acre per year. You don't usually see pocket gophers above ground unless they are excavating soil to the surface as they tunnel.

Pocket gophers can be found in alfalfa fields, pastures,

rangelands, roadside areas and even backyards. They prefer to eat dandelions and legumes like alfalfa, but will also eat many kind of plants including the roots of trees, grasses, perennial bulbs and garden vegetables.

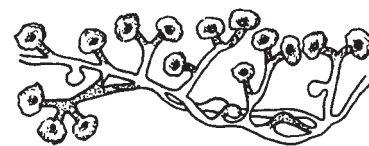
Pocket gophers maintain their extensive tunneling system throughout the year. They build most of their mounds in early spring and fall, or during periods of wetter, cooler soil conditions. Each gopher can create dozens of mounds, sometimes within a span of just a few days. So even though you may see a large number of mounds in an area, rarely are there more than eight pocket gophers per acre.

The soil mounds made by pocket gophers are fan- or bean-shaped and 8–12 inches across. There is no visible opening because the animals plug-up the mound. Pocket

gopher mounds are sometimes confused with mole damage. Mole mounds are conical shaped and 4–6 inches in diameter. It is important to know which animal you have before attempting control.

If not managed, pocket gopher activity can damage turf, crops, trees and plants. Their digging can also impact airport runways, roadbeds, dams, dikes and other earthen structures. Their mounds can dull and plug hay-harvesting equipment and leave fields rough. Pocket gophers can severely damage buried utility cables, communication lines and irrigation pipes.

Pocket gophers do have some redeeming traits. Pocket gopher burrowing does promote soil health by helping mix nutrients and organic matter through the soil. Research has shown



A single pocket gopher may exist within an extensive system of feeding tunnels and chambers.

their digging reduces water runoff, erosion and at the same time, also promotes diversity among prairie plants. Pocket gophers are food for several predators including skunks, foxes, bobcats, weasels, hawks, owls and gopher snakes (bull snakes).

Landowners can use several methods to reduce pocket gopher damage to their property. Management is most effective when a combination of methods are used. Proper timing and monitoring are



The plains pocket gopher spends almost its entire existence below ground.

essential to long-term success.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

NebGuide G1509 "Controlling Pocket Gophers in Nebraska" is available online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest> or at the extension office.



By Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

A serving of "Old Fashioned Bread Pudding" is a delicious way to add whole grain breads to your meals! Buttering each slice of bread and sprinkling it with cinnamon before cutting it into cubes makes every bite especially tasty!

Old Fashioned Bread Pudding

(Serving Size: 1/2 cup • Yield: 6 servings)

5 slices whole wheat bread
2 tablespoons margarine or butter
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/3 cup sugar, white or brown
1/2 cup raisins
3 eggs
2 cups nonfat liquid milk
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spread one side of bread with margarine or butter. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Cut bread into 1-inch cubes. In a medium-sized bowl, combine bread cubes, sugar and raisins. In another bowl, blend eggs, milk, salt and vanilla. Pour liquid over bread mixture; lightly mix. Transfer mixture to a casserole dish coated with oil or sprayed with a nonstick spray. An 8 x 8-inch square baking dish works well. Bake uncovered for 50 to 60 minutes or until the center of the mixture reaches 160 degrees F when measured with a food thermometer. At this temperature, a metal knife inserted near the center of the pudding comes out clean. Serve warm or cold. Do not let bread pudding set at room temperature over two hours TOTAL time. Eat within three to four days.

Source: Adapted from: Montana Extension Nutrition Education Program, Web site Recipes, Montana State University Extension Service, available at Food Stamp Nutrition Connection Recipe Finder at <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>

Alice's notes: Avoid overcooking eggs in custard-type dishes—such as this recipe—AND assure safety by using a food thermometer. Overcooking may cause curdled or weeping custard. To determine doneness in egg dishes such as bread or rice pudding, quiche, casseroles, stratas, etc., the center of the mixture should reach 160 degrees F when measured with a food thermometer.

At this temperature, the very center of a custard-type dish may still be slightly liquid; however, the heat retained in the mixture will cause it to continue cooking and to set after removal from the oven. You may need to insert the thermometer at an angle to assure enough of the thermometer reaches into the food to measure the temperature.

Sarah Phillips, <http://baking911.com>, notes a custard pie is done when the liquid area in the center of the pie is smaller than a quarter. This is why you may see the recommendation to insert a metal knife near the center of custard-type dishes to check if it comes out clean.

Do a "Don't Do" List!

Fitting in Healthy Food and Fitness

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
 UNL Extension Educator

If you're like most people you could use a few more hours to accommodate your daily "to do" list activities. Rather than adding "take a time management class" to your "to do" list, consider starting a "don't do" list.

You may discover doing LESS can bring MORE enjoyment to your life. Especially if doing less allows you to spend time doing more to contribute to your health and happiness!

Exercise and diet are two areas often given short shift in the typical time-squeezed day. Yet they are important for our overall quality of life. Free-up your time so you can achieve your personal fitness goals.

What Can You Stop Doing?

"Great idea," you may be saying, "but how?" Here are some tips from time-savvy registered dietitians who were asked: What one or more things have you STOPPED doing to have more time to focus on eating healthy and exercising? Perhaps one will trigger a "don't do" for you.

"The most helpful thing I can think of that I have done to make more time is we moved our TV set out of our living room on the main floor of our home, to the rec room in our basement. I watch very little TV now that I have to make the intentional decision to go downstairs to watch it; what I do watch is usually planned watching and not something I just happened



to get interested in because the set was on and it caught my eye.

I also refuse to buy any clothing for me or my family members that requires ironing."

—Carol Selden Jackson

"I stopped painting my fingernails to have time for a Master's Swimming program. I used to spend one night a week on my nails and now I spend it swimming instead.

I replaced styling my hair, mousse and hair spray and got a wash and wear haircut so I can work out during my lunch hour and still get back to work.

Instead of getting together with girlfriends for birthday lunches, we get together for birthday runs or bike rides."

—Lizann Powers-Hammond

"Don't stay up late watching lame shows on TV. Go to bed early, get up early, and head to the gym to exercise. You'll feel better all day long."

—Jane Erickson

"Don't go near the kitchen or any place else there's food while you're on the telephone."

—Shari P. Mermelstein

"Don't try so hard to please your family with all the proper food groups and favorites when pushed for time—whole-grain cereal with milk, fresh fruit, yogurt, juice and peanut butter are favorites for all family members, take just minutes to put on the table and can fulfill all of the food groups. The five-course meal will have to wait. Don't keep searching your calendar for an hour block of time to go to the gym or health club and away from your family—look for those opportunities to play and be active—it counts!!! Playing in the park, biking, walking at the zoo, raking and playing in the leaves are all fun for kids and provide a chance to be active.

Physical activity . . . it's everywhere you go!!!"

—Barbara Fraser

"I no longer answer the phone in the middle of exercising. Important messages are now left on my answering machine—other callers simply hang up! I can always return a call, but . . . I may not return to exercising."

—Alice Henneman

Now. Start thinking "don't do" and start "don't doing" it NOW!

5 More Main Dishes—Each Using Only 5 Ingredients



Helping limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

Mardel Meinke
 UNL Extension Associate

To help answer the question "What's for dinner," five main dishes using ground beef were featured last month. This article will highlight main dish recipes using chicken (online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/nebline>). The first four recipes use cooked chicken which can be cooked, de-boned (if not boneless), chopped and frozen ahead of time. The last recipe uses uncooked chicken breasts. These recipes make about four servings and can be doubled for more servings or to use for a later meal.

Plan each meal to include all five food groups and enjoy!

Chicken Enchiladas

1 cup cooked chicken, chopped
4 ounces cream cheese
1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies
4 flour tortillas
4–6 ounces Mexican or cheddar cheese, shredded

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Mix the chicken, cream cheese and green chilies. Spread this mixture over the flour tortillas and roll up. Place the tortillas in a greased baking dish. Sprinkle the cheese over the top, cover and bake for 20 minutes. For a more moist enchilada, pour 1/2 cup milk over the enchiladas before baking.

Chicken Salad Sandwiches

1 cup cooked chicken, chopped
2 tablespoons salad dressing
2 tablespoons ranch dressing
1 tablespoon pickle juice
1/3 cup celery, finely chopped

Mix all the ingredients together and serve over toasted buns.

Creamy Chicken Stew

4 medium red potatoes
1 cup cooked chicken
1 can cream of chicken soup
2 cups frozen peas and carrots
1/4 cup zesty Italian dressing

Poke several holes through each potato and cook in the microwave until tender, (about 7 minutes on High). Cut potatoes into bite-size pieces and put in a large saucepan. Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer on medium for 10–20 minutes. Refrigerate leftovers promptly.

Chicken and Stuffing Bake

1 can (14.5 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 package (6 ounces) stuffing mix for chicken
1/2 cup water
1 cup cooked chicken, chopped
1 cup mozzarella cheese

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Mix diced tomatoes, stuffing mix and water until just moistened. Layer chicken, cheese and stuffing mixture in this order, in a medium baking dish. Cover and bake 30 minutes or until chicken is cooked through. Refrigerate leftovers promptly. To reheat, cover each serving and microwave on HIGH about 1-1/2 minutes.

Chicken Fingers

2 chicken breasts, boneless not cooked
1 cup flour
2 eggs, beaten
1 cup butter-flavored cracker crumbs
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
1/2 teaspoon onion powder (optional)
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder (optional)

Cut chicken in 1-inch strips. Put flour in a small bowl and beaten eggs into another bowl. Mix cracker crumbs, Parmesan cheese and seasonings in another small bowl. Dip and coat each strip in the flour, then egg, then cracker crumb/cheese mixture. Place strips in large frying pan coated with 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Cook on medium heat, turning once, until chicken is done (about 15 minutes).

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

President's View—Bonnie's Bits

Bonnie Krueger
FCE Council Chair

Reading the horticulture page in the NEBLINE sort of tells us it is time to change the clock ahead and spring forward on March 8. Don't forget to check your smoke detectors and the carbon monoxide detectors.

St. Patrick's Day is March 17. A day the immigrants came to the United States and



began observing the holiday in Boston. The first St. Patrick's Day parade was held in New York in 1766. Today the tradition continues with people from all walks and

heritages by wearing green, eating Irish food and attending parades. St. Patrick's Day is bursting with folklore, from shamrocks to the leprechaun, to pinching

those not wearing green. Have a magical St. Patrick's Day.

Getting back to spring I hope you have all those seed catalogs read and your orders sent so you will be ready for the first day of spring, March 20 and ready to plant the garden.

Just like to say Thank You to all FCE clubs for participating in the Valentine project for our service people last month.



FCE News & Events

Leader Training on "Bullying" Feb. 24

The March FCE and community leader training is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 24, 1 p.m. The program "Bullying" will be presented by Extension Educator Lorene Bartos. This program will help parents, teachers and other concerned adults learn how to equip children and adults with skills and knowledge necessary to identify and deal with bullying. Non-FCE members should call Pam at 441-7180 so materials can be prepared.

FCE Council Meeting, March 23

Mark your calendar for the Monday, March 23 FCE Council meeting. We will be meeting at a restaurant for lunch and meeting. Presidents watch for a

letter in the near future for details. All FCE members are welcome to attend the Council meetings.

Southeast District FCE Meeting, March 27

Lancaster County is hosting the Southeast District FCE meeting on Friday, March 27 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Registration will begin at 10:30 a.m. Janet Broer, Southeast District Director and Lancaster County FCE member is organizing the event.

Extension Educator Alice Henneman will present the program "Freezing Foods for Future Meals."

Registration fee is \$12 and includes a catered lunch. Make checks payable to FCE District Meeting and send

to Janet Broer, SE District Director, 2201 West Cardwell Road, Lincoln, NE 68523. Registrations are due March 23.

Scholarship Applications Due May 1

A \$400 scholarship provided by the Lancaster County FCE Council is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in Family and Consumer Science or a health occupation. This is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2009 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are due May 1 in the extension office.

Tips to Help Parents Talk to Their Kids About Sex and Technology

Talk to your kids about what they are doing in cyberspace. Just as you need to talk openly and honestly with your kids about real life sex and relationships, you also want to discuss online and cell phone activity. Make sure your kids fully understand messages or pictures they send over the Internet or their cell phones are not truly private or anonymous. Also make sure they know others might forward their pictures or messages to people they do not know or want to see them, and school administrators and employers often look at online profiles to make judgments about potential students/employees. It's essential your kids grasp the potential short-term and long-term consequences of their actions.

Know who your kids are communicating with. Of course it's a given you want to know who your children are spending time with when they leave the house. Also do your

best to learn who your kids are spending time with online and on the phone. Supervising and monitoring your kids' whereabouts in real life and in cyberspace doesn't make you a nag; it's just part of your job as a parent. Many young people consider someone a "friend" even if they've only met online. What about your kids?

Consider limitations on electronic communication. The days of having to talk on the phone in the kitchen in front of the whole family are long gone, but you can still limit the time your kids spend online and on the phone. Consider, for example, telling your teen to leave the phone on the kitchen counter when they're at home and to take the laptop out of their bedroom before they go to bed, so they won't be tempted to log on or talk to friends at 2 a.m.

Be aware of what your teens are posting publicly. Check out your teen's MySpace, Facebook and

other public online profiles from time to time. This isn't snooping—this is information your kids are making public. If everyone else can look at it, why can't you? Talk with them specifically about their own notions of what is public and what is private. Your views may differ but you won't know until you ask, listen and discuss.

Set expectations.

Make sure you are clear with your teen about what you consider appropriate "electronic" behavior. Just as certain clothing is probably off-limits or certain language unacceptable in your house, make sure you let your kids know what is and is not allowed online either. And give reminders of those expectations from time to time. It doesn't mean you don't trust your kids, it just reinforces you care about them enough to be paying attention.

Source: *The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy*



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Removing Soot from Carpet

Soot is tricky, the first thing you want to do is avoid rubbing it into the carpet. Vacuum the spot, using a canister vacuum and a crevice tool. Avoid the upright type of vacuum with a rotating brush, as the brush will spread the stain. Gently work from the outer edge of the stain to the center. If this doesn't remove most of the stain, call a carpet cleaning professional. If the stain is mostly gone, apply rubbing alcohol to a clean white cloth and blot gently until the spot is removed. Do *not* saturate the carpet, as the alcohol can harm the backing if it has a latex bond. If the spot remains, mix 1/4 teaspoon of liquid dish detergent with one quart of water. Blot gently with a clean white paper towel. Continue until the spot is removed. To rinse, mist using tap water and a spray bottle; blot to remove the moisture. Spray lightly; apply a pad (about 1/2" thick) of paper towels weight down with a brick. Let the carpet thoroughly dry.

Food Entrepreneur Seminar, March 9

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Food Processing Center is offering a one-day seminar for all individuals interested in exploring the idea of starting a food manufacturing business. The "From Recipe to Reality" seminar will be offered on Monday, March 9.

The workshop is specifically designed to provide entre-

preneurs with an understanding of key issues they will need to consider when starting a food business, including market research, packaging, pricing, legal and business issues.

Pre-registration is required. Registration deadline is Feb. 27. Contact Jill Gifford at 472-2819 or jgifford1@unl.edu for an information packet.

National Small Food Manufacturer Conference in Lincoln

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Food Processing Center is presenting the first National Small Food Manufacturer Conference on April 23-24 at the Holiday Inn Downtown in Lincoln. This conference has been designed specifically for small food manufacturers throughout the country. Learn how to Heat up your food business!

The conference includes current topics and industry

recognized national speakers which will educate and motivate participants. Attendees will:

- Learn how to expand and grow their businesses
- Participate in interactive sessions
- Explore new opportunities
- Network with peers and industry experts

For more information or to register for the conference, go to www.fpc.unl.edu/nsfmc or contact Jill Gifford at 472-2819.



Child Care—Under the Big Top

A conference for those who provide child care.

In-service hours will be given for this conference.

Saturday, April 4

8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln, NE**

Speakers include:

- Jeanne Baer, Creative Training Solutions
- Bridget Schultz, Clerk Family Service CCFP
- Mary Nelson, UNL Extension Educator
- Bev Fall, Home Child Care Provider
- Julie Anderson, Certified Community Educator

Cost is \$15

**For more information, call 441-7180
Pre-registration is due March 23**

Local Bagworm Control Initiative

Last year Lancaster County Horticulture Extension Staff and Lancaster Master Gardeners received hundreds of calls on bagworms. To help educate the public on this serious problem and its control we have formed a plan. Over the next few months you will see monthly reminders on what you can do to deal with this issue.

Please take a walk through your landscape and check all your plant material, especially spruce and junipers. During the months of March, April and early May, the only means of control is hand picking the bags from your plants. Place them in a bag and put the sealed bag in the trash. If you have large trees or too many bagworms to effectively pick off your plants, chemical control will be needed after they hatch in June.

—Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate



Once the eggs hatch in early June, large bagworm populations can completely defoliate and kill evergreens during summer.

Since deciduous plants grow new leaves each year, the defoliation caused by bagworms feeding usually does not kill them.



On a Juniper



On a Spruce



On a Crabapple

All photos taken in Lancaster County, Fall 2008 by Extension Associates Mary Jane Frogge and Soni Cochran

FOR MORE INFORMATION

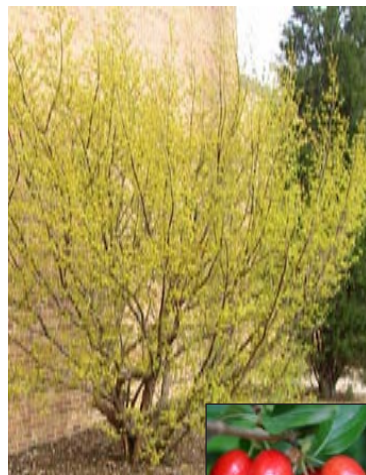
Additional photos and video are online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/hort> and color brochures are available at the extension office.

Sign Up for Free E-mail Horticulture Newsletter

HortUpdate is a FREE e-mail newsletter from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension which provides timely information to the lawn and landscape industry. This e-mail includes current lawn and landscape problems with control recommendations and a seasonal 'To Do' list. To subscribe, go to <http://extensionhorticulture.unl.edu>



2009 Great Plants Selections



Cornelian cherry dogwood



Creeping mahonia

The Great Plants program is a joint effort of the Nebraska Nursery & Landscape Association and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum that selects and promotes exceptional plants. These plants are reliably hardy, easy to care for and ornamentally worthwhile.

Tree of the Year Cornelian cherry dogwood, "Cornus mas"

Durable small tree, with rounded clusters of tiny yellow flowers in early spring before leaves appear, dark green leaves and bright cherry red fruit in late summer. The olive-shaped fruits are relished by songbirds or can be used to make jam or jelly. Bark is an attractive mix of gray and brown that exfoliates on mature branches. The main trunk is typically very low, with low branches hovering just above the ground. It can be trimmed up at the base to make it more tree-like and better reveal the exfoliating bark. This slow-growing European native remains free of insect, disease and cold injuries. It

prefers rich, well-drained soils, but tolerates high pH and heavy clay better than any dogwood. Ideal for a small yard as an accent plant or planted in groups as a hedge or screen. It grows best in full sun, but tolerates some shade.

Shrub of the Year Creeping mahonia, "Mahonia repens"

This stoloniferous ground-cover grows along the rocky ridges and under the thick evergreen canopy of western Nebraska's Pine Ridge. Stiff, spine-tipped leaves, reminiscent of holly, turn a rich bronzy purple in late fall through the winter. This plant has fragrant, yellow flowers in early spring, followed by small clusters of grape-like, dark bluish-purple berries in late summer. Planted in masses, it spreads slowly to make an attractive evergreen groundcover, but



Arkansas bluestar

grows best in part shade or dry shade, especially under conifers. Growing only 12–15 inches high, this drought-tolerant gem is best protected from winter winds that can burn the foliage.

Perennial of the Year Arkansas bluestar, "Amsonia hubrichtii"

Excellent, dependable plant with upright stems that emerge in early spring and rapidly extend to mature size. Plants are topped with starry, pale blue flowers in May and June. Fine, thread-like dark green leaves unfold along the thin stems to form a very fine-textured mound of foliage. In autumn, the foliage turns a lovely golden-yellow and is at its brightest when planted in full sun. Takes several years to grow into an attractive mound, but dependable and long-lived in rich, well-drained soils.


Grass of the Year Shenandoah switchgrass, "Panicum Shenandoah"

Bright green leaves of this switchgrass are tipped with dark red by mid-summer, turning entirely red and orange in fall. Only 4 to 5 feet tall in flower, this slower-growing selection is very adaptable, tolerating drought and soggy soils, high pH and full, hot sun. One of the best grasses for maintaining upright habit and tight clump form in the garden. Plant as a single specimen, in masses or as a companion to perennials with bold foliage.

Source: Nebraska Statewide Arboretum



Shenandoah switchgrass



Garden Guide

THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

- Complete the pruning of shrubs, ornamental trees before growth starts, except for spring flowering shrubs. Prune those which bloom in spring as soon as they finish flowering.
- If you have not done it already, check stored tools and outdoor furniture for signs of rust. Remove any surface rust with steel wool and paint with rust preventing paint.
- Turn the compost pile.
- Start transplants indoors of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant.
- Pick a permanent spot for herbs in the garden.
- Place birdhouses built this winter outdoors this month. Birds will begin looking for nesting sites soon.
- Do not plow your garden when the soil is wet. It will form clods which are difficult to break up and interfere with cultivation during the summer.
- Plan your vegetable garden on a sheet of paper to utilize the space most efficiently. Remember to rotate the vegetables in the garden to reduce insect and disease problems.
- Buy a notebook and use it to keep all your gardening information. List what you plant in the garden. Include the name of seed companies, plant name, variety, planting date and harvest date. During the growing season keep notes on how well the plant does. If the variety is susceptible to disease, record what was used to treat any problems. All this information will be helpful in planning future gardens.
- Rake the lawn to remove leaves and twigs.
- Some annuals, such as verbenas, snapdragons and petunias, take 70 to 90 days to bloom. They should be started indoors in early spring.
- Buy some new perennials for your flower border. Spring is a good time to renew and add variety to your landscape.
- How are your houseplants doing? Check all five growing factors if your house plants are not growing well. Light, temperature, nutrients, moisture and humidity must be favorable to provide good growth.
- Finish repairing and painting of window boxes, lawn furniture, tools and other items in preparation for outdoor gardening and recreational use.

Weed Awareness

Prepared by

Weed Control Authority
Lancaster County



The Weed Control Authority is responsible for implementation of the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act throughout Lancaster County. The authority has also provided the inspection and administration of the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program since entering into an interlocal agreement with the city in 1996.

The County Commissioners serve as the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority. Russell Shultz serves as the superintendent and supervises a seasonal staff of six weed inspectors with the assistance of Chief Inspector Barb Frazier and Lori Pracheil, Account Clerk.

444 Cherrycreek Road, Bldg. 'B', Lincoln, NE 68528 • (402) 441-7817 • www.lincoln.ne.gov/cnty/weeds

2008 Annual Report

The major goal of the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority is to get voluntary compliance of landowners with the Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act and the City of Lincoln's Weed Abatement Program.

The first step is to make landowners aware of these responsibilities and obtain their willingness to abide by them. The second step is to provide any needed assistance to the landowners. The third step is to carry out an inspection program, as needed, to identify infestations and violations for the purpose of getting landowners to prevent and control the noxious weed infestations or to avoid and correct weed abatement violations when they occur.

Noxious Weed Program

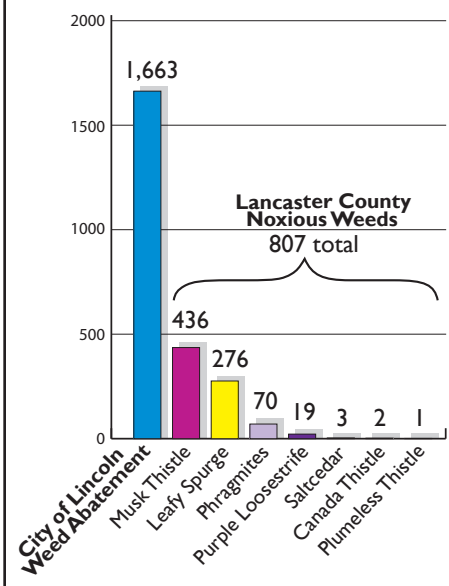
The Lancaster Noxious Weed Program promotes awareness and knowledgeable landowners who can carry out effective control programs. The program provides general awareness through the annual Weed Awareness insert in the UNL Extension in Lancaster County NEBLINE, the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority Web page, various exhibits and newsletters.

The most direct awareness effort is carried with an extensive survey and inspection program. This program utilizes a computer data base of all inspections since 1994 and the Lincoln/Lancaster Geographic Information System used to record the locations of noxious weed infestations found.

Sites are selected for inspection from the previous year's inspection

Inspection Summary

2,470 total violations/infestations



information which indicates the severity and extent of the infestation and the control efforts made by the landowner. Sites are selected where it is felt the landowner needs a reminder letter or assistance in control efforts and, in a few cases, the need for possible forced control.

These landowners are provided with an aerial photograph showing the location(s) of the noxious weeds found by the inspector and recommended options for control. Additional landowner sites are inspected when observed, a complaint is received and infestations found. Follow-up inspections are made to assure control is accomplished.

Musk Thistle—In 2008, 491 sites were selected for inspection. An additional nine sites were inspected

because of complaints received and 28 sites observed by the inspectors during other inspections and while making a survey of the roads and adjacent lands when driving the 1,400 miles of county roads the last part of June. Over 8,300 acres were inspected resulting in finding 436 infestations on 975 acres. Cards were sent to 41 landowners with only trace infestations; reminder letters were sent to 241; and 91 legal notifications were sent. The Authority contracted for forced control on three sites and nine acres. Landowners controlled 292 sites on 588 acres. Landowners did not completely control 117 sites. These landowners received letters about doing fall control and informed these sites would be inspected in the spring of 2009.

Leafy Spurge—A total of 342 leafy spurge sites were selected for inspection, of which 191 were located in county roadsides. The 170 county roadside sites found to be infested were contracted for spraying. The county has been spraying these roadside sites since 1989. Even with this annual spraying effort, all the sites have not been controlled. The number and acres of sites have probably been reduced by 50%. This is a reflection of how difficult leafy spurge is to control. There was a total of 353 acres found infested on 276 sites. Reminder letters were sent to 70 landowners and a legal notice was sent to one landowner.

Purple Loosestrife—All 41 known wild purple loosestrife infestations were selected for inspection. One ornamental site

continued on next page



Phragmites Added to Noxious Weed List

Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director, Greg Ibach announced the statewide designation of non-native phragmites as a noxious weed April 15, 2008. The statewide designation, which took effect immediately, is an expansion of a temporary designation issued in 2007 for phragmites within the Republican River basin.

Ibach said the statewide designation is necessary to help county weed control officials work with landowners to address areas of high infestation and to prevent further spread of this invasive species. Phragmites is primarily found along Nebraska's rivers, streams, floodplains and lakeshores.

"In order to be good stewards of the land, we need to protect our river systems from invasive riparian, non-native plants," Ibach said. "The designation is an important tool for weed control officials who are working on projects to control phragmites."

Ibach has the authority to issue temporary designations under the Noxious Weed Control Act. The temporary designation will expire in February 2009, and Ibach said he anticipates moving ahead with the formal process to add phragmites to the permanent noxious weed list before that time.

According to Mitch Coffin, NDA noxious weed program manager, phragmites can quickly form a monoculture and displace native riparian plants, grasses and forbs. Once phragmites matures, it sends out rhizomes searching for water; these rhizomes can stretch as much as 30 feet in search of water. Phragmites can grow to 20 feet tall.

Learn to Recognize Nebraska's Noxious Weeds

The Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act states it is the duty of each person who owns or controls land to effectively control noxious weeds on such land. Pictured are Nebraska's noxious weeds which can be found in Lancaster County.*



Musk Thistle



Leafy Spurge



Phragmites



Purple Loosestrife



Saltcedar



Canada Thistle



Plumeless Thistle

Noxious weed is a legal term used to denote a destructive or harmful weed for the purpose of regulation. The Director of Agriculture establishes which plants are noxious. These non-native plants compete aggressively with desirable plants and vegetation. Failure to control noxious weeds in this state is a serious problem which is detrimental to the production of crops and livestock and to the welfare of residents of this state. Noxious weeds may also devalue land and reduce tax revenue.

*Nebraska's noxious weeds Spotted and Diffuse Knapweeds have not been found in Lancaster County.

Weed Awareness

2008 Annual Report

from previous page

was also inspected as a result of being observed by an inspector. A total of 63 inspections were made on the 44 sites. Inspectors found 19 violations on 13 acres. No violations were found on the other 25 sites. Landowner notifications included four legal notices, 15 reminder letters and one personal contact. Landowners controlled 13 sites. Follow-up will be made on all 19 violations.

Phragmites—Non-native Phragmites was designated a new noxious weed early in the year. We found 32 phragmites sites in 2007. We have since determined these sites plus 38 sites found in 2008 are all non-native and, therefore, noxious. These sites cover almost 140 acres (see the map on back page of this insert). Landowners are being notified of the location sites and options for control. We will be working with landowners in 2009 to arrive at an acceptable control plan.

Other Noxious Weeds—Canada thistle inspections were made on five sites. Landowners controlled two of the three sites found infested. Saltcedar was controlled on all three sites found.

City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Program

The City of Lincoln Weed Abatement Ordinance requires owners of land within the city limits to maintain the height of weeds and worthless vegetation below six inches. Three seasonal inspectors are used in administering this program. Most inspections are carried out as a result of complaints. There were 171 properties pre-selected for inspection because of past violations and the lack of response to correct the violations. There were 1,921 complaints on 1,837 properties. Over 280 additional properties were inspected with significant violations where it appeared there was no regular maintenance performed.

It required 4,647 inspections to make the initial and follow-up inspections on 2,117 sites on 902 acres. Violations were found on 1,663 sites on 602 acres. Complaints were made on 455 sites that did not have a violation when inspected within three days of the complaint. These sites either were not in violation when the complaint was made, or they were cut prior to the inspection. Notifications of violations were made with 820 legal notices, 738 reminder letters, 59 published in the paper and 243 personal contacts. The 1,441 sites cut by landowners were 87% of the violations. This was 5% less than the previous year. Forced cutting was contracted on 207 sites, 92 sites more than in 2007.

Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force Report

On May 1, 2007, Governor Dave Heineman signed into law LB 701, comprehensive water legislation that included riparian vegetation management activities. The legislation created the Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force and assigned it specific responsibilities:

1. Develop and prioritize vegetation management goals and objectives;
2. Analyze the cost-effectiveness of available vegetation treatment; and
3. Develop plans and policies to achieve such goals and objectives.

The legislation also requires the task force to make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature. The 2007 and 2008 reports have been submitted and can be found at www.agr.ne.gov under the Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force button. Governor Dave Heineman appointed the task force members on June 21, 2007 representing state agencies and a cross-section of water and vegetation management interests. Russell Shultz, Lancaster County weed

control superintendent, was appointed representing the Nebraska Weed Control Association.

Work groups were created to aid the task force in identifying, and then framing, issues critical to meeting the goals and objectives. It was determined work groups could solicit information from, and include in discussions, experts who are not task force members. Any final decisions, however, will be made solely by the task force.

The Vegetation Management and Treatment Work Group is framing a plan of attack on invasive riparian vegetation.

The Streambed Ownership Work Group is addressing the need for clear designation of ownership within the streambed.

The Education and Awareness Work Group is looking at ways of sharing information about successful riparian vegetation management activities with the general public and landowners

The Survey and Monitoring Work Group is working on the identification of infestation location, composition and extent.

The Vegetation Water Use Work Group is looking at water usage by riparian vegetation and, whether or to what extent, vegetative water use can be determined to affect stream flow.

LB 701 also created a grant program for management of riparian vegetation, and stated the Legislature's intent to appropriate \$4 million for 2007 and 2008 for this purpose. Since July 1, 2007, these projects have made tremendous progress in attempting to deal with a huge problem. Six projects have treated over 10,000 acres on 338 miles of the Republican and Platte Rivers. Almost \$3.5 million were expended as of Dec. 15, 2008. Senator Tom Carlson has introduced LB 98 in the 2009 Unicameral session to extend the Riparian Vegetation Management Grant Program and the work of the task force.



Phragmites crowding out the Platte River



Spraying saltcedar at Lake McConaughy

North American Weed Management Conference Comes to Nebraska in 2009

The 17th Annual North American Weed Management Association Conference and Trade Show will be at the Holiday Inn, Kearney, NE September 21–24, 2009. The theme is “Response to the Riparian Invasion—Improving the Health of Our Riparian Areas.”

The North American Weed Management Association (NAWMA) is a professional association of individuals interested in managing invasive plants. Their annual conference highlights the efforts of the state or province of the conference location.

The Nebraska Weed Control Association will host this year's conference. Lancaster County Weed Control Superintendent Russ Shultz is program chair.

The Conference

The riparian plant invaders present a unique challenge and threat across North America—very invasive weeds which can gobble up the narrow, but

extremely important, riparian areas quite rapidly. These threats in Nebraska were addressed at the 2006 “Threats to Nebraska Rivers-Invasive Plants Conference.” The governor established a riparian vegetation management task force and the legislature provided \$4 million of grants for use in 2007 and 2008. With the help of these funds, weed management areas are expending about \$7 million to fight the invading riparian vegetation over this two year period. Conference attendees can hear and see the results of this effort and learn about future planned-actions including what we should be doing to get ready for the next riparian plant invaders.

Speaker Topics

The Governor is scheduled to give the welcome with Senator Tom Carlson giving the keynote on Nebraska's Riparian Vegetation Management Plan. Other speakers will address Nebraska's response. Their topics will be Nebraska Weed Management Areas and Natural

Resources Districts Leading the Way, Nebraska Vegetative Management Grant Program Projects, NRCS Assistance, Nebraska Noxious Weed Control Act Amendments Responding to Needs, Nebraska On-Line Weed Management Program, Multi-State Cooperative Riparian Efforts, Status of the North American Phragmites Explosion, Getting Ready for the Next Riparian Plant Invaders, and an example awareness program.

Tour

A tour will show the problems and responses on the Platte River. Attendees can see the invasion of non-native plants in the streambed and adjacent riparian areas. See the results of the weed management areas' projects, Rowe Sanctuary efforts, and herbicide, grazing and burning trials.

More information and registration information will be available online at <http://nawma.org> or <http://neweed.org> or contact the Lancaster County Weed Control office at 441-7817.

Weed Free Forage Certification Program

You can prevent potential noxious weed infestations by insisting on Certified Weed Free forage. As a buyer, you should be aware that noxious weed infested forage products can cost you hundreds or even thousands of

dollars down the road. Ask your forage supplier to have their hay certified prior to harvest. Forage growers must call the Lancaster County Weed Control Authority one to two weeks prior to harvesting. There is no charge for the field inspections. There is a small charge for the cost of bale tags.

Nebraska carries out its Weed-Free Forage Certification Program in accordance with the standards of the North American Weed Management

Association standards.

Certified weed-free forage products include: straw, alfalfa/grass hay, forage pellets/cubes, alfalfa hay, grain hay and grass hay. Weed free forage is required on many U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, in National Parks, Bureau of Reclamation land, military locations, tribal lands as well as National Fish and Wildlife refuges. The Nebraska Department of Roads

requires weed-free forage on highway projects. Restrictions may apply to other lands administered by provincial, county, state or federal agencies.

If you have questions about certification regulations or weeds not allowed in certified forage, please see the North American Weed Management Association's (NAWMA) Web site at <http://www.nawma.org> for a complete list of weeds and regulations.

Weed Awareness

Musk Thistle Management Strategy

Musk thistle remains the most plentiful noxious weed in Lancaster County. It takes continued efforts to keep under control. To successfully fight weeds, you need to know as much as possible about each weed and develop a strategy to manage each weed. Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*) is usually thought of



Musk and plumeless thistle are easiest to kill during the rosette stage (pictured).

as a biennial, germinating one year, usually in the fall, overwintering and flowering the next year. When there is a long enough cool period in the spring, some musk thistle plants will act as annuals by germinating in the spring and flowering in early summer. Musk thistle spreads only by seed. One head can produce over 1,000 seeds. The seeds can remain viable in the soil for 10 years. The key to managing musk thistle is to prevent all plants from going to seed, prevent the spread of seeds and maintaining vigorous growth of desirable vegetation.

Control Steps

- 1) Scout the areas with past infestations in late-September and early-October for seedlings and rosettes. A seed bank has built up in the soil at these sites. These seeds will remain viable for eight or more years waiting for the right conditions to germinate.
- 2) It is most effective to treat the entire area with herbicides in order to control all the small seedlings, rosettes and seedlings not emerged. Spot control of these sites usually results in a lot of escapes since not all the plants are observed and some plants germinate later.
- 3) Use 2,4-D as a contact herbicide along with another herbicide adding to the effectiveness of killing the plants present but also have a residual that will kill later-germinating plants. Some of the herbicides providing residual control are Escort (<http://www.dupont.com/ag/vm/products/escort.html>), Tordon 22K, Vanquish, Banvel and Telar (<http://www.dupont.com/ag/vm/literature/h87276.pdf>).
- 4) Scout these fall-treated areas in March and April for escapes and new plants.
- 5) Provide control prior to bolting of the flower stem in May. Use 2,4-D along with a residual herbicide.
- 6) Scout these areas weekly and provide needed follow-up control until July. Be alert to the musk thistle plants acting as annuals due to a cool spring. Remember, the best approach to control musk thistle is to scout and treat areas with past infestations (these areas have built up a seed bank in the soil) in the fall and spring. Provide treatment in the spring prior to bolting and always scout treated areas for escaped plants. One plant going to seed can contribute thousands of seeds to the seed bank.

Mechanical Control

Severing the root of musk thistle a couple of inches below the soil surface will kill the plant. The entire root does not have to be removed. Hand cutting or mowing has to be done at weekly intervals to be effective. Fire has not proven to provide effective control. The plants survive prescribed burning, but can be easily found and controlled by other means after the burn.

Biological Control

Musk thistle head weevil (*Rhinocyllus conicus*) is an introduced biocontrol species widespread in Lancaster County. They are reducing the number of viable seeds being produced, but do not provide complete control by themselves. You can learn more about biological control by visiting Cornell University Web site at <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/ent/biocontrol/weedfeeders/wdfdrtoc.html>

Prevention

Infestations occur where there is a seed bank in the soil and the conditions are right for germination and survival. Healthy vegetation provides competition and minimizes the survival of musk thistle seedlings. Care should be taken not to spread seeds from infested sites or to use forage or seeds contaminated with noxious weed seeds. Equipment should be cleaned before leaving an infested site, if possibly contaminated. Only weed-free certified forage and seed should be used.

Reference: You can find much more information on musk thistle by looking at The Nature Conservancy Element Stewardship Abstract for *Carduus nutans* at <http://tncinvasives.ucdavis.edu/esadocs/cardnuta.html>

Invasive Plant Web Sites

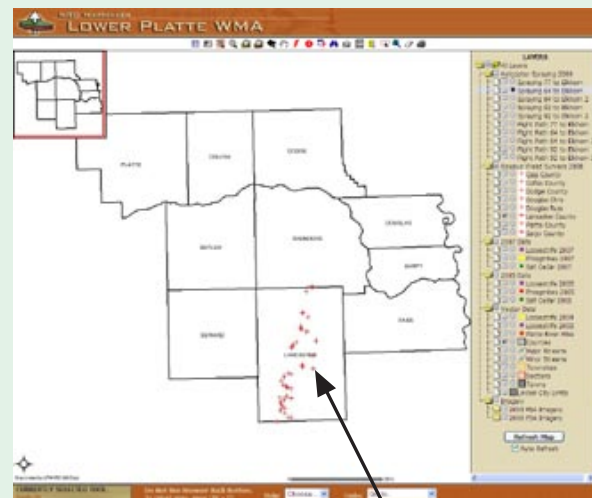
The Internet is an excellent place to find information. It is sometimes hard to key in on the best and most reliable information. Below are some excellent sources of information on invasive plants. You should be able to find any information on invasive plants.

Local and Regional

Lower Platte Weed Management Area—<http://www.lowerplattewma.org>

The LPWMA is a group of public and private agencies and individuals concerned with stopping the spread of noxious and invasive plants located in the Lower Platte River drainage area. This Web site provides awareness information and other information on the activities of the WMA.

- **LPWMA Mapping Program—<http://www.nrdmapmaker.org/loosestrife>**—The LPWMA uses GPS cameras and GIS technology to track infestations and control efforts along the river corridor. This data is compiled using NRD MapMaker system, resulting in an interactive map with infestation site details and photos.



Lancaster County Weed Control Authority—<http://www.lancaster.ne.gov/cnty/weeds>

Species of Concern; Contacts; Publications; Laws and Regulations; Management; Special Note: Weed Complaint Form.

Nebraska

Nebraska Weed Control Association—<http://www.neweed.org>

The Nebraska Weed Control Association (NWCA) is a non-profit organization comprised of representatives known as weed control authorities in county government. The Web site provides information about NWCA and News, Invasives, Events, Gallery and Grants.

- **NWCA Invasive Mapping System—<http://www.neweedmapper.org/Weed>**—a state-wide mapping solution for all 93 counties in Nebraska. This mapping system creates a state-wide database of invasive species information and maps them using ArcIMS.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture

- **Noxious Weed Program—<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/nwp/nwp1.htm>**—Biological Control Information, Information for County Weed Control Superintendents, Noxious Weed Control Act and Noxious Weed Responsibilities & Regulations.
- **Pesticide Program—<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/division/bpi/pes/pest1.htm>**—Pesticide Program is responsible for regulating the distribution, storage and use of all pesticides in the state of Nebraska. Information is provided on Applicator Certification and Training, Health, Safety, and Environment, Pesticide Labels, Questions and Issues, Product Registration, Dealer Licensing and Regulations and Enforcement.
- **Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force—<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/riparian/riparian.htm>**—The Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force was created in 2007 by the Nebraska Unicameral as part of LB 701. The legislation outlined these duties and responsibilities for the Task Force to develop and prioritize vegetation management goals and objectives; analyze the cost effectiveness of available vegetation treatments; develop plans and policies to achieve goals and objectives; make recommendations to the Governor and legislature regarding legislation needed to achieve its goals and objectives. All the minutes of meetings, reports and other information are available on this Web site.
- **Weeds of the Great Plains—<http://www.agr.state.ne.us/forms/nw11.pdf>**—hardbound book which features, detailed narratives of over 400 plants; Line drawings of 266 weeds; large colored photographs; close up photographs of weed flowers, seedlings, and key identification characteristics; identification methods to distinguish similar species; historical attributes and uses of each plant; and habitats and descriptions of growth forms.

Nebraska Invasive Species Project—<http://snr.unl.edu/invasives>—resource for invasive species information. This Web site is dedicated to providing information about research and management efforts going on throughout the State of Nebraska.

2009 Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska—<http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/ec130.pdf>—EC130 published by University of Nebraska—Lincoln Extension. Provides research results and recommendations on weed management in Nebraska Crop Production (PDF format). A print edition is available at extension offices for \$5.

National

North American Weed Management Association—<http://www.nawma.org>—NAWMA is a network of public and private professional weed managers who are involved in implementing any phase of a county, municipal, district, state, provincial or federal noxious weed law. The mission of NAWMA is to provide education, regulatory direction, professional improvement and environmental awareness to preserve and protect our natural resources from the degrading impacts of exotic, invasive noxious weeds.

National Invasive Species Information Center—<http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov>—gateway to invasive species information; covering federal, state, local and international sources.

The PLANTS Database—<http://plants.usda.gov>—provides standardized information about the vascular plants, mosses, liverworts, hornworts and lichens of the U.S. and its territories and includes a section on invasive and noxious weeds.

Weeds Gone Wild: Alien Plant Invaders of Natural Areas—<http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien>—a Web-based project of the Plant Conservation Alliance's Alien Plant Working Group providing information to the general public, land managers, researchers and others on the serious threat and impacts of invasive alien (exotic, non-native) plants to the native flora, fauna and natural ecosystems of the United States.



Weed Awareness

Lower Platte Weed Management Area Report

The Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) has been working with landowners in the Lower Platte River Basin since 2003 fighting the non-native plants invading the Platte River and its tributaries. The LPWMA includes the ten counties in the Lower Platte River Basin, including Lancaster County.

The initial efforts were directed at controlling purple loosestrife and the few saltcedars found. During this period, the number and extent of phragmites infestations have expanded greatly. During this same period, many of the barren or intermittently vegetated sandbars have been invaded by an intermingling of willows, cottonwoods and purple loosestrife, saltcedar and phragmites. This is seriously impacting the flow of the river and the nesting habitat of the least terns and piping plovers.

Because of this dramatic change to the river, the LPWMA has expanded its goal from, just dealing with the non-native plants

in the riparian area, to the management of all of the vegetation for the benefit of the landowners and the public. The Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) in the LPWMA have contributed greatly in addressing this expanded goal in 2008.

These NRDs include the Papio Missouri River NRD, Lower Platte North NRD, Lower Platte South NRD and Central Platte NRD. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the of the Many public and private landowners cooperated and contributed in this effort.

Survey and Mapping Program

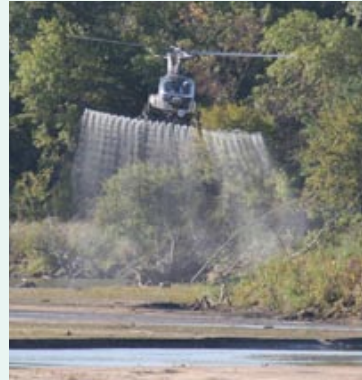
The Lower Platte WMA Mapping Program was developed and is being maintained by the GIS specialist of the Lower Platte North NRD. The LPWMA has been mapping locations of purple loosestrife, saltcedar and phragmites since 2003. This mapping program is being used to map newly-found infestations and

monitoring the sites found.

The LPWMA, Lower Platte North NRD and the Papio-Missouri River NRD each purchased a camera with GPS capability. These cameras were used to survey phragmites along 170 miles of the Platte River and in Lancaster County. Over 300 sites were found along the lower Platte River and over 70 sites were found in upland areas in Lancaster County. These sites and photos can be viewed on the LPWMA Mapping Program at <http://www.nrdmapmaker.org/loosestrife>

2008 Control Efforts

A total of 1,054 acres of vegetated sandbars in the Lower Platte River were treated by helicopter, airboat and ground applications. Very precise applications of an EPA-approved aquatic herbicide was made in October by a Sky Copter helicopter utilizing GPS technology controlling the application and providing a



Helicopter application

record of spatial data, extent and rates. A total of 751 acres of vegetated sandbars were treated along 56 miles of the Lower Platte River from north Douglas County line to the mouth of the Missouri River.

Ground applications were made by County Weed Control Authorities and contracted applications by RUE LLC. Nebraska Airboat Association members donated their time and the use of their airboats to assist the counties with the applications. A total 303 acres were sprayed from airboats. About 152 acres were contractor controlled. Over 84 acres were controlled

by landowners with EQUIP contracts. County Weed Control Authorities sprayed 67 acres.

Plans for 2009 and the Future

The goal of the LPWMA is to improve the health of the riparian areas of the Lower Platte River and its tributaries for the benefit of the owners, users and general public by controlling and preventing riparian plant invaders and improving stream-flow capacity by managing the vegetation in the streambed and on the banks. Continued commitment of funds is expected from the NRDs and the landowners in controlling this recently invading vegetation of the Lower Platte River and tributaries.

The lower 50 miles of the river was adequately controlled in 2008. Considerable control was done on the upper 120 miles of the Lower Platte River with plans to complete the initial control effort in 2009. Follow-up control will be required annually. Annual surveys will be made of the river and upland areas. Landowners will be informed of any plant invasions and provided with recommended control and management options. Plans are to follow-up with the removal of controlled vegetation as needed to promote natural scouring of the sandbars and improve nesting habitat for the piping plover and least tern.



Mapped location

Photo with latitude, longitude, elevation, date and time

Update on Lancaster County Phragmites

Last year's Weed Awareness insert raised concerns about phragmites, a very tall non-native grass that invades wetlands. At that time, we had found 32 sites in Lancaster County. The non-native phragmites received an emergency designation in the Republican River counties in August 2007. This emergency designation was expanded to the entire state in April 2008.

There is a native variety of phragmites that is not as invasive and has not been designated as a noxious weed. Dr. Bernd Blossey a leading researcher of phragmites from Cornell University, visited several of the phragmites sites in Lancaster County and determined they were all non-native. As a result of this visit, we feel all the sites we have found are non-native.

Dr. Blossey pointed out in the past, it was felt the greatest threat for expansion of phragmites was from the plant parts being carried by water downstream. It has been found the dispersion of the seeds by wind as well as water is contributing too many of the new sites being found. The plentiful seed production, although not long lived, will germinate when deposited in areas with a saturated soil condition. This has been demonstrated by the increasing number of infestations being found in Lancaster County upland areas. We have been increasing the surveys in

upland areas, but we need the help of other agencies, groups and the general public in reporting sites they observe.

Survey and Mapping

The Lower Platte Weed Management Area Mapping Program was developed and is being maintained by the GIS specialist of the Lower Platte North NRD. A camera with GPS capability is being used to survey phragmites along the Platte River and in Lancaster County (see above). Over 300 sites were found along the lower Platte River and over 70 sites were found in upland areas in Lancaster County. These sites and photos can be viewed on the LPWMA Mapping Program at <http://www.nrdmapmaker.org/loosestrife>

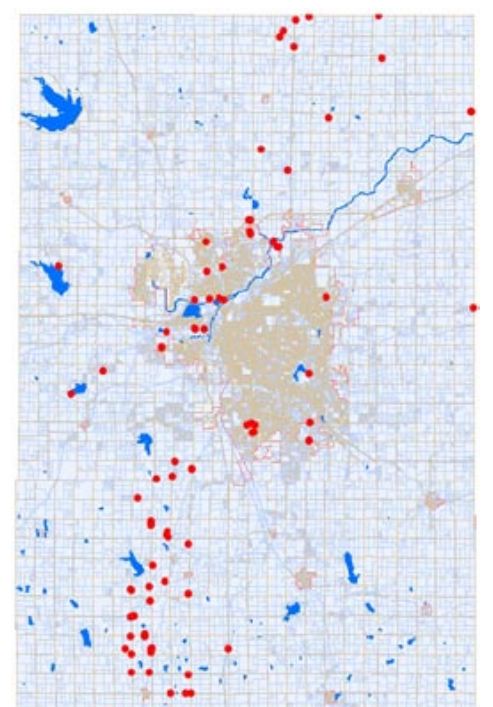
Identification

Phragmites is characterized by its towering height of over 15 feet and its stiff wide leaves and hollow stem. Its feathery and drooping inflorescences (clusters of tiny flowers) are purplish when flowering and turn whitish, grayish or brownish in fruit. They wave like plumes in the breeze. Flowering occurs from July-October. Phragmites is a colonial plant, spreading by rhizomes (underground stems) and capable of forming large stands or colonies arising from one or a few seeds or plant pieces. These colonies form along the margins of streams and in marshes and ditches. They can form in wetlands and in

disturbed areas and their aggressive growth and tendency to out compete other plants and form monospecific (one species) stands creates concerns.

Control

To date, field experience and research have shown using herbicides is the most effective method and is recommended as the first step toward effective control of phragmites. Glyphosate and imazapyr are two herbicides known to be effective in controlling phragmites. These herbicides are non-selective and will affect any plant species through contact with the leaves and stems. However, when applied using the correct method and used according to chemical manufacturer's instructions, impacts to native plants, as well as mammals, birds and fish can be minimized. The aquatic formulations of these herbicides (Habitat® and Rodeo®) are required for use in wetlands. An additional chemical called a surfactant should be added to these aquatic formulations to improve the effectiveness of the treatment. While the cost per gallon of imazapyr can be significantly higher than glyphosate, results from recent studies suggest imazapyr used alone or in combination with glyphosate can control phragmites for a longer period of time. When using herbicides, phragmites should be treated in early- to late-summer (June-September) using imazapyr,



Map of the 70 phragmites sites found in Lancaster County in 2008.

or late-summer (August-September) using either glyphosate or a glyphosate/imazapyr mixture, to achieve effective control. Some of the infestations in Lancaster County are very small and may not have any surface water present at the time of application. These sites could be treated with non-aquatic labeled glyphosate (Roundup® or generic formulations of glyphosate). All landowners with identified phragmites sites will receive more information on initial and long-term control options.

Early Detection is Key to Minimizing Insecticide Use in Home Gardens

Jim Kalisch

UNL Extension Entomologist

Nobody likes pests, especially when they are crawling over fresh fruits and vegetables. This spring after planning what to plant, research pest problems.

There are general feeding types and specific pests for common garden vegetables, such as lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes and peppers. The Web, garden books, local extension offices, garden journals or magazines provide excellent information.

The most common pests are grasshoppers, spider mites and leaf beetles. Cutworms also are general pests that result from moths coming into the garden and laying eggs. Cabbage and broccoli often are attacked by imported cabbage worms in late spring and carrots often are attacked by carrot weevils in late July.

It usually is not necessary to treat soil before or at planting, but it's a good idea to till ground thoroughly before gardening so any underground life will be exposed. Some insects left underground will attack roots or bulbs.



Spider mite damage and two-spotted mites

All photos by Jim Kalisch, UNL Department of Entomology



Bean leaf beetle



Spotted cucumber beetle



Colorado potato beetle



Variegated cutworm



Cabbage looper



Carrot weevil

Early detection is important. Check once or twice a week to detect the first occurrence of pests, which often is indicated by chewed-up portions of leaves, wilting, spots or holes.

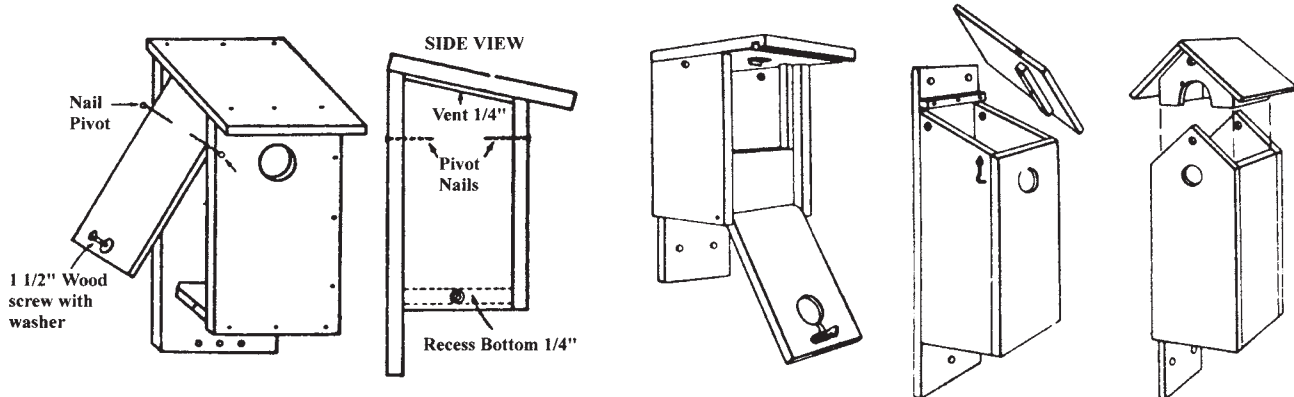
Measures to minimize the use of

insecticides include physically removing the pest, destroying the pest on sight, removing the infected plant part or using insecticidal soap, especially for soft-bodied pests.

Unfortunately, there may come a

time to use insecticide as treatment. Appropriate insecticides do not last long, usually only one to three days. Choose insecticides with carbaryl or permethrin because they can be used on a variety of crops.

Bird House Care Is Important To Make It Last



Ron Johnson, Ph.D.
UNL Wildlife Specialist

Providing bird houses and shelves can be a fun and rewarding part of a wildlife program. A well-built house that is durable, rain-proof, cool and easy to clean can add to the attractiveness of a yard.

To determine what type of nest box or platform to build, think about the birds most likely to visit the yard. Bird houses and shelves can be constructed from a wide variety of materials, including PVC pipe or natural items, such as gourds. Avoid using metal for bird house construction because it tends to overheat. Any good, solid, untreated wood generally is the best construction material.

Cedar, pine or poplar are particularly easy to work with and weather well. Cedar is durable and its naturally occurring aroma may discourage parasites inside the house. One-inch boards, which actually measure 3/4 inch, provide sufficient insulation and are widely available. Re-using scrap wood from other building projects can save money and cut down on waste.

Galvanized siding or aluminum nails or screws are preferable because they don't rust and are readily available. Also, nails with roughened shanks are better than smooth nails. To prevent injuries to occupants from sharp points, make sure there are no nails protruding from the box cavity.

Bird houses and shelves, especially those made of durable, long-lasting cedar, don't need to be

painted. Exterior paint, however, will prolong the life of a bird house or shelf made of less durable pine or poplar. If colors are used, natural tones, such as light brown, gray or dull green, are best.

Drilling a few small holes in the floor of the birdhouse allows proper drainage. Leaving 1/2 inch gaps under the eaves or drilling several 1/4-5/16 inch holes along the top of the sides provides adequate ventilation.

Birds can be particular about the entrance hole size, so measurements should be fairly exact. Also, properly-sized entrance holes may keep out unwanted species. Avoid perches at the entrance hole because birds don't need them and perches make handy grips for would-be nest predators. In Nebraska, facing the entrance hole in a southeasterly to northeasterly direction may help prevent chilling from cold spring rains.

Roughen the inside portion of the hole just below the entrance so young birds can climb out of the house easily. This can be done by sawing grooves 1/8 inch deep or by punching dents in the wood with a screwdriver.

Houses need an access door that allows easy inspection with minimum disturbance to occupants. One of the sides can be made to swivel out for side access or hinges can be placed on the top. Also, houses mounted on smooth metal poles are less vulnerable to predators than those mounted to a wooden post or tree.

Clean nest boxes and shelves are more likely to be occupied. Proper

sanitation improves the chances of a healthy and successful brood. Nest boxes and shelves should be cleaned prior to each nesting season and immediately after any broods have left the box, even if the adult birds show signs of re-nesting. Old nesting material, eggs and dead nestlings should be removed from the box or shelf to keep parasites down. A nearby birdbath, with clean water and a place for sand or dust baths, also will aid in discouraging parasites.

Monitor bird houses once a week to prevent non-native nuisance species, such as house sparrows or European starlings, from taking over. If cleaning boxes after each brood has fledged, the box may be used again throughout the summer. In the fall, after cleaning out the boxes for the last time, the boxes can be left up as shelter in the winter or access to the boxes can be prevented by plugging the entrance holes or the boxes can be put in storage. If left outside, squirrels may gnaw to enlarge the entrance holes of boxes.

Know when not to disturb nesting birds. Avoid disturbing nest boxes at night and during rainy or windy weather because under these conditions, frightening the adult birds away could result in chilled eggs or nestlings. Also, avoid checking boxes the first few days of incubation, in the morning when females are laying eggs and when the young are close to fledging. Adults may abandon nests and nearly-fledged young could leave the nest prematurely.

Fertilizing House Plants

Plants brought into the home from a greenhouse are moving to an environment where light is less intense, and hence, where growth will be slower. Most plants already have sufficient fertilizer in their soil to sustain growth for up to three months under interior conditions. This is particularly true during fall and winter.

Even if plants continue to grow vigorously, it is wise to wait a month while it adjusts to its new environment, before adding fertilizer. Likewise, a newly potted plant needs time in which to grow new roots to absorb the fertilizer you will be applying.

It is often easier to feed a number of plants at the same time, and the schedules can be combined in this way: for a general practice, apply fertilizer to most indoor plants every 1-2 months while growth is rapid, and once or twice only during the winter months. Alternatively, apply the plant food more frequently in a diluted form; this accommodates plants which would be injured by full-strength fertilizer. Approximately half the recommended strength means using only half as much fertilizer per plant or in solution.

Annual plants grow very quickly and need fertilizing every two or three weeks during their short season. Some flowering plants, like Azalea, should not be fed at all while they are in flower.

Any prepared fertilizer mixture for the type of plants you have is fine: for most foliage and flowering plants, an N-P-K analysis ratio close to 1-2-1 will give balanced growth. African Violets grow best with a mix containing more nitrogen (N); and there are other formulations available for acid-loving plants like Azalea and Gardenia. For annuals and other garden plants growing in hanging baskets, an outdoor fertilizer is fine.

Soluble compounds are easy to apply and provide quicker results than solids or slow release pellets. Simply apply the fertilizer solution in place of water when you would normally be watering the plants. However, be sure the soil is slightly damp when you fertilize; never feed plants with dry soil, because roots will be damaged by the chemicals you add unless they are diluted further by soil moisture.

Use all fertilizers at or weaker than the recommended strength of dilution, never stronger. Newly rooted cuttings, seedlings and young plants will benefit from weaker solutions to avoid damage to the soft young roots.



Spring Rabbit Show

Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m.

Lancaster Event Center, Exhibit Hall
84th & Havelock, Lincoln,
Registrations 7:30–9:00 a.m.

Open to all
youth 8–18

Awards will be given!

CLASSES: Fancy Rabbits, Commercial Rabbits, Pet Class
and Pee Wee Class. **REGISTRATION FEES:** \$2.50 per
rabbit or cavy, \$1 fur class, \$1.50 Showmanship.
FREE CONTEST: Rabbit Quiz

RAFFLE FOR MANY PRIZES! TICKETS 3 FOR \$1.
Please bring an item for raffle such as crafts, rabbit items, plants,
Easter/Spring items, books, etc.

Opportunity
to learn and
practice your
showmanship!

All rabbits must be tattooed in the left ear
(available at the show). All rabbits must be
brought in solid bottom cages which are
leak-proof with a CLOSED, solid bottom.

For more information, call Rodney
at 782-2186 or Marty at 441-7180

Sponsored by Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPs
Committee and UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Exhibit space courtesy of the Lancaster Event Center.

4-H Clubs Needed to Help Provide Booths at Kiwanis Karnival, April 18

The annual Kiwanis Karnival, a FREE family event is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 18, 7–9 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 26 Street, Lincoln. The Karnival features carnival type games for the kids, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun and fellowship. Lincoln Center Kiwanis has sponsored this event for over 50 years providing prizes and snacks.

4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. This is a great community service and leadership activity for clubs. If your 4-H club or family would like to have a booth or for more information, call Lorene at 441-7180. Come join the fun!

4-H Speech and PSA Workshop, March 5

A workshop designed for 4-H'ers in their first years of competing in the 4-H Speech and PSA contests will be held, Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Participants will learn basic skills to write speeches and PSA's. They will also learn basic delivery techniques. Please call Deanna at 441-7180 by Feb. 26 to preregister.

4-H Speech Contest

The 2009 4-H Speech Contest will be held Sunday, April 19 at 1:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. The Speech Contest provides 4-H'ers the opportunity to learn to express themselves clearly, organize their ideas and have confidence. Register by April 13.

Contest divisions and requirements:

- **Clover Kid:** 5-7 years old, read or recite any short story, nursery rhyme, poem, pledge, etc..
- **Novice:** 8-9 years old, 2 minutes in length, any topic related to 4-H.
- **Junior:** 10-11 years old, 2-3 minutes in length, any topic about a 4-H experience.
- **Intermediate:** 12-13 years old, 3-5 minutes in length, encouraged to talk about a 4-H project you would like others to enroll in.
- **Senior:** 14-19, 5-8 minutes in length, a timely topic related to 4-H.

For speech resources check out our Web site at
<http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>

4-H PSA Contest Guidelines

Once again, the 4-H Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest will be by audio only. Any 4-H member ages 8–18 can submit a prerecorded PSA via cassette tape or CD playable on any standard stereo equipment to Deanna by Monday, April 13. If you do not have the capabilities to record a PSA, contact Deanna to set up a recording time. Awards and comment sheets will be announced and handed out at the Speech Contest on Sunday, April 19. Additional contest information, PSA guidelines and examples can be found online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>

Do You Like Bugs?

4-H Entomology
Workshop, Feb. 23

A 4-H Entomology workshop will be presented on Monday, Feb. 23, 7–8:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. This free workshop will introduce the new 4-H entomology curriculum and include a hands-on project which 4-H'ers could exhibit at the county fair. Youth ages 10 and up and adult volunteers are encouraged to attend. Pre-register by Feb. 18 by calling 441-7180.

4-H Camp Scholarships

The following scholarships go towards attending Nebraska 4-H summer camp(s). Application deadline is May 1—preference given to applications submitted by March 1. Applications are available at the extension office and at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/Programs/award.shtml>

Windstream 4-H Camp Scholarship—Thanks to the generosity of Windstream Communications, two Lancaster County 4-H members will receive full scholarships to attend a 4-H summer camp at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Camp near Gretna! Applicants must be 9 or older and currently enrolled in 4-H. Scholarship is based on need.

Joyce Vahle Memorial Scholarship—\$100 scholarship is awarded to a 4-H'er between the ages of 8-14 to be used towards attending 4-H camp. Applicants should be currently, or have had at some point been, enrolled in at least one sewing project.

4-H Air Rifle Club Meeting, March 2

The Air Rifle (BB) 4-H Club will have its first meeting on Monday, March 2, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Rd. Interested youth must be at least 8 years old by January 1. Both current 4-H members and those interested in joining 4-H are invited to attend. RSVP preferred; please call 441-7180 by Feb. 27.

4-H Scholarship Applications due March 2

Nebraska 4-H offers several scholarships for 4-H'ers who are graduating seniors. Deadline for applications is March 2. Information and applications are available online at <http://ne4hfoundation.org> or at the extension office.

Jammie Jamboree, March 28

Join us at the Jammie Jamboree and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road. Bring your own pull-on pajama bottom pattern, prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-way design fabrics or plaids) and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc. and a sack lunch. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome. Sign up by March 27 by calling 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the county fair and styled in the 4-H Style Revue under Clothing Level 1.

Pillow Party, March 7

Join us at the Pillow Party and make a pillow on Saturday, March 7, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Bring 1/3 yard and 2/3 yard contrasting fabrics, pre-washed, 100% cotton (no plaids) and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc. Pillow forms provided. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome. Sign up by March 6 by calling 441-7180. Pillows may be entered at the county fair under Sewing for Fun.

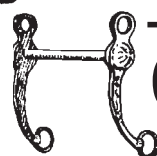
Clover College Instructors and Volunteers Needed

4-H Clover College will be held June 16–19 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Clover College is four days of fun-filled, hands-on workshops for youth ages 6 and up. If you have workshop topic ideas, or if you would like to teach a workshop or volunteer to help, please contact Tracy at 441-7180. All help is very much appreciated!

Statewide Opportunities for 4-H Youth

Applications are now being accepted for the following statewide opportunities for 4-H youth age 14 and older. If you are interested, call Tracy at 441-7180.

- Youth Curriculum Committee will give youth a voice in 4-H Curriculum decisions such as selecting new project manuals. Deadline is March 1.
- Youth Multimedia Team is seeking 4-H'ers who are interested in technology and communication. Deadline is April 1.



HORSE BITS

Roping/Goat Tying Clinic Scheduled for March 8

A third 4-H Roping/Goat Tying clinic is scheduled for Sunday, March 8, at 2 p.m. in the Amy Countryman Arena at the Lancaster Event Center. If you have not yet signed up, please call Marty at 441-7180.

4-H Horse Stampede, March 14

The 2009 4-H Horse Stampede will be held on Saturday, March 14 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. The stampede is the State 4-H art, public speaking, demonstration and horse bowl competitions. If you didn't sign up to participate this year, please come and watch. Support the competing Lancaster County 4-H'ers and see if the competitions are something you might want to do next year. No cost to attend.

For more information, go to <http://www.animalscience.unl.edu/extension/equine/4h/stampede.html> or call Marty at 441-7180.

4-H Horse Incentive Program Begins

The 2009 Incentive Program began Feb. 14 and runs through June 30. 4-H'ers can log hours they spend doing horse related activities and win awesome prizes. Forms are available online at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h> or at the extension office. Again this year, you are able to include hours spent at Teen Council meetings and activities. One can earn bonus hours by being an active junior leader, completing a record book, serving as a club officer and entering a static entry at the fair. Remember, you must use the log sheets provided by the 4-H office. If you have any questions, call Marty at 441-7180.

4-H Achievement Night

Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Night was held Feb. 10 at the International Quilt Study Center & Museum. The evening included an opportunity to explore the museum and current exhibitions. Achievement Night was presented by 4-H Council with generous support from UNL. 4-H'ers, 4-H clubs and 4-H leaders were recognized for their 2008 achievements. Lancaster County 4-H congratulates these youth who work throughout the year on their 4-H projects and commit themselves to excellence! We also thank the 4-H leaders who volunteer their time and talents to youth! For a complete list of award, scholarship and pin recipients (as well as additional photos) visit online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h>



Grace Farley was awarded **OUTSTANDING 4-H MEMBER**. She has been a 4-H member for 13 years, involved in numerous 4-H projects and contests. She is a member of Cool Clovers 4-H club and junior leader for Star City Explorers. She has been in many leadership activities such as 4-H Teen Council (currently as President) and Citizenship Washington Focus. She has participated in many community service projects.



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS

Presented to 4-H'ers who have completed the most hours of community service. Award recipients receive a \$30 Activity Certificate from Lancaster County 4-H Council redeemable towards 4-H activities and supplies.

Age 14 and over: Grace Farley, Spencer Farley, Terra Garay, Kyle Pedersen, Hannah Spencer, Jessica Stephenson, Britni Waller

Age 13 and under: Maddie Gabel, Sadie Hammond, Saige Hammond, Abby Spencer, Jaime Stephenson, Lexi Trumbley



4-H MERITORIOUS SERVICE was awarded to Keith Dey who was a 4-H volunteer for 14 years. He was a project leader and organizational leader of the Flying Hoofs 4-H Club. He served as a Lancaster County Fair 4-H superintendent of multiple horse shows and for four years he was overall horse superintendent. He has served as president of Horse VIPS and as president of 4-H Council.



CAREER PORTFOLIOS

County winners:

Animal Science: Elizabeth Boender
Leadership & Citizenship: Sadie Hammond
Consumer & Family Sciences: Saige Hammond
Animal Science: Levi Meyer*
Healthy Lifestyles: Britni Waller*
**Nominated to represent Lancaster County at district competition*



NEBRASKA DIAMOND CLOVER

A new statewide program which encourages 4-H members to engage in a variety of projects and activities.

Level 1 Amethyst: Alyssa Bennett, Valerie Gabel, Adriana Miller, Lucy Polk, Jacob Rushman

Level 2 Aquamarine: Madeline Gabel



Jeff Cassel and Ellen Muehling were presented American Youth Foundation **I DARE YOU** awards for striving to achieve their personal best.



COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Lancaster County 4-H Council — \$500: Carly Belz, Grace Farley, Eliza Hammond, Christina Mayer, Hannah Spencer, Katie Zabel

Lancaster County Teen Council — \$250: Grace Farley and Christina Mayer

Lane Community — \$200: Trevor Woodward

Lincoln Center Kiwanis — \$1,000: Grace Farley

2008 Outstanding 4-H Club Awards

The Lincoln Center Kiwanis Club presents Outstanding 4-H Club Awards to the top 4-H clubs participating in the Lancaster County Fair. There are three categories based on number of club members. One category winner is awarded the Wayne C. Farmer memorial cup as the overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. Clubs receive points based on all members' total county fair exhibit and contest placings. The following clubs were recognized at a recent Lincoln Center Kiwanis meeting and at 4-H Achievement Night:



Cool Clovers 4-H Club of Lincoln is winner of Category I (7 members or less) — and winner of the Wayne C. Farmer trophy as overall Outstanding 4-H Club for the year. The club's 7 members were enrolled in approximately 37 projects and entered 81 total exhibits at the County Fair. This is the 4th year as an Outstanding Club and the 1st year winning the Wayne C. Farmer trophy. Jean Pedersen is club leader.



Rough Riders 4-H Club located south of Lincoln is winner of Category II (8–12 members). This club's main project is horse, but the 11 members were also enrolled in approximately 9 other projects and entered 77 total exhibits at the County Fair. The club is winning this award for the 1st time. Kathy Anderson is club leader and Tammy Goering and Chris Peters are assistant leaders.



South Prairie Wranglers of the Hickman area is winner of Category III (13 or more members). The club's 54 members were enrolled in approximately 26 projects and entered 226 total exhibits at the Lancaster County Fair. The club is winning this award for the 1st time. Kendra Ronnau is club leader and there are 7 assistant or project leaders.

Lincoln's Free Tax Preparation and Filing

The Human Services Federation and the Lincoln Tax Assistance Coalition will provide free tax preparation services for residents who qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). In 2008, over 5,000 free tax returns were filed which resulted in \$4.3 million in refunds to our local economy.

The EITC is a special tax benefit for working people who earn low to moderate incomes. To be eligible for the EITC for tax year 2008, your earnings are as follows:

- The maximum amount of income you can earn and still get the credit has increased. You may be able to take the credit if:
- You have more than one qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$38,646 (\$41,646 if married filing jointly),
- You have one qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$33,995 (\$36,995 if married filing jointly), or
- You do not have a qualifying child and your earned income was less than \$12,880 (\$15,880 if married filing jointly)

"The majority of families in this community that live in poverty are working families, and nobody who works full time and has children in their

home should be in poverty," said Rick Carter, Executive Director of the Human Services Federation and Chair of the Lincoln Tax Assistance Coalition. "Special emphasis will be placed on increasing the claiming of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and other federal tax credits created to increase the incomes of low income workers; and engaging low income families and individuals in a gradual process of building financial assets for the future."

The Lincoln Coalition is a public, private and non-profit collaboration between the Internal Revenue Service and the Human Services Federation. The group is part of a state and national movement to assist people who are working but still unable to make ends meet. Program support comes from the Lincoln Community Foundation, United Way of Lincoln and Lancaster County, City of Lincoln, Lancaster County, Building Strong Families Foundation, and the Woods Charitable Fund. The work is made possible by the commitment and dedication of community volunteers.

For Free Tax Assistance Sites outside of Lincoln, call 1-877-659-7870.

Lincoln VITA Tax Sites and Hours

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) tax preparation sites are located throughout the city. All sites use E-filing which files taxes quicker. Direct deposit into a bank account gets the refund to citizens faster. No appointments necessary unless noted.

ANDERSON LIBRARY

- 3635 Touzalin Avenue
- Mondays, 4:30-7 p.m. (through Feb. 23 only)
 - Wednesdays, 4:30-7 p.m.
 - Sundays, 2:30-5 p.m. (through March 1 only)

ASIAN COMMUNITY & CULTURAL CENTER

- 2615 O Street
- Monday-Friday by appointment, call 477-3446

BENNETT MARTIN LIBRARY

- 14 & N Streets
- Tuesdays, 1-4 p.m.
 - Wednesdays, 1-3:30 p.m. (through Feb. 25 only)
 - Sundays, 1:30-4 p.m. (through March 1 only)

EISELEY LIBRARY

- 1530 Superior Street
- Monday, 1-3:30 p.m. & 4:30-7 p.m.
 - Thursday, 1-3:30 or 4:30-7 p.m.

GOOD NEIGHBOR CENTER

- 2617 Y Street
- Sunday, 1:00-4:30 p.m. (through March 1 only)

INDIAN CENTER

- 1100 Military Road
- Monday-Friday by appointment, call 438-5231 ext. 105

LINCOLN ACTION PROGRAM

- 210 O Street
- Mondays, 5:30-8 p.m.
 - Thursdays, 5:30-8 p.m. (through Feb. 26)
 - Fridays, 9-11:30 a.m.

SALVATION ARMY

- 2625 Potter Street
- Tuesday, 12-2:30 p.m. (through Feb. 24 only)

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE ENT BUILDING

- 301 S. 68 Street Place
- Mondays, 2-4:30 p.m.

UNL MAIN CAMPUS

- Student Union Building - 14th & R (Feb. 28-March 11)
- Monday thru Wednesday, 5-8 p.m.
 - Saturday and Sunday, 1-5 p.m.



Benjamin Schuerman (right), a senior finance major from Hallam and Richard Christensen (left), a senior accounting major from Sacramento CA provide free tax preparation for UNL neighbors at the UNL East Campus Union.

UNL Students Get Involved at Campus Tax Preparation Site

University of Nebraska-Lincoln students have provided free tax preparation service for the past three years. Dr. Linda Moody, assistant director of Student Involvement, says, "Our students gain real world experience through this volunteer opportunity. It helps accounting majors get internships."

In 2008, UNL student volunteers prepared 385 tax returns which generated \$623,000, including \$225,000 of Earned Income Tax Credit. The 26 student volunteers donated 5,200 hours to help low and moderate income families electronically file their returns. Those receiving refunds have said they plan to pay off bills, repair a car or pay their mortgage.

Benjamin Schuerman,

a senior accounting major from Hallam has served in the military. In addition to preparing general tax returns, he helps military families prepare tax returns. This is his second year as an EITC volunteer. "I like to see the smiles on their faces when I tell them how much money they will be receiving," says Ben. He adds, "It's also good work experience."

Free parking and childcare is also provided at the UNL sites. UNL students are also providing expertise six times at Everett and McPhee Elementary Schools and Carol Yoakum Community Center, where UNL interpretation services are provided.

To learn more, go to <http://involved.unl.edu/eitc> or call 472-2454.

What to Bring to Have Your Taxes Prepared

- W-2s and 1099s from your employer
- Social Security Cards (for yourself, spouse, children and other dependents)
- Copy of last year's tax return (very helpful)
- List of other income/expenses (itemized deductions)
- Childcare information (providers ID number & receipts for amount paid)
- Blank check or savings account information for direct deposit
- 1099s for interest, dividends, unemployment, government and miscellaneous income
- 1098 for student loan interest, mortgage interest or property tax

EXTENSION NEWS

New and Outgoing Lancaster County Extension Board Members

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County welcomes its newest extension board appointments—recently appointed to three year terms are Pablo Cervantes, Wesley Daberkow, Annie Stokes.



Pablo Cervantes (above left), Wesley Daberkow (above), and Annie Stokes (left)

Current officers are:

- Carna Pfeil, President
- Debhora Day, Vice President
- John Chess, Secretary/Treasurer

Extension thanks outgoing board members Oscar Rios Pohirieth (former Vice President) and Kendra Penrod for their contributions.

Extension board members assist

extension staff in establishing and accomplishing extension program goals and objectives. The work is in partnership with UNL Extension on priority issues through educational programs in agriculture, horticulture, pest management, nutrition and food safety, family living, home environment and 4-H youth development.



(L-R) Kendra Penrod and Extension Board President Carna Pfeil



(L-R) Oscar Rios Pohirieth and Extension Educator Gary Bergman.

Extension Board Association Scholarship Forms Due March 15

The Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards is accepting applications for their scholarship program for the 2009/10 academic year.

- One \$1,000 scholarship to any incoming freshman or transfer student enrolling into the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) or into the College of Education and Human Science (CEHS).
- One \$500 scholarship awarded to a current student of CASNR or CEHS, who is a sophomore or higher.

Applications are due by March 15. To obtain a scholarship application and for more information, go to <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Programs/award.shtml> or call Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

EXTENSION CALENDAR

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

February

- 20-21 **Strengthening Family Treasures Daughter/Mother Camp**, Carol Joy Holling Center near Ashland 5 p.m.-5 p.m.
- 21 **Beginning Beekeeping Workshop** 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
- 23 **4-H Entomology Workshop** 7-8:30 p.m.
- 24 **Family & Community Education (FCE) and Community Leader Training, "Bullying"** 1 p.m.
- 27 **Winning the Game Marketing Workshop**, Horizon Bank, 10841 N. 142 St, Waverly 8:15 a.m.-Noon

March

- 1 **Nebraska 4-H Scholarships Applications Due**
- 2 **Air Rifle (BB) 4-H Club Meeting** 7 p.m.
- 3 **4-H Council Meeting** 7 p.m.
- 5 **4-H Public Speaking (Speech & Presentation) Workshop** .. 6:30 p.m.
- 7 **4-H Pillow Party** 9 a.m.
- 8 **4-H Roping/Goat Tying Clinic**, Lancaster Event Center - Amy Countryman Arena 2 p.m.
- 8 **4-H Teen Council Meeting**, Location TBA 3 p.m.
- 13 **Extension Board Meeting** 8 a.m.
- 14 **4-H Horse Stampede**, Animal Science Bldg, UNL East Campus ... 8 a.m.
- 17 **Guardian/Conservator Training** 1:30-4:30 p.m.
- 19 **Parents Forever/Kids Talk About Divorce** 5:30-9:30 p.m.
- 23 **Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting**, TBA
- 27 **Southeast District Family & Community Education (FCE)** .. 10:30 a.m.
- 27-29 **National Youth Horse Leaders Symposium**, UNL
- 28 **4-H Jammie Jamboree** 9 a.m.
- 28 **4-H Rabbit Spring Show**, Lancaster Event Center, Exhibit Hall 9 a.m.

National Youth Horse Symposium in Lincoln, March 27-29

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension will host the American Youth Horse Council's 2009 National Horse Leaders Symposium in Lincoln on March 27-29.

The event will boast more than two-dozen internationally and nationally respected teachers assembled to share their keys to successful youth horse programming. Presentations will be aimed at Adult Leaders of Youth Horse Programs, Industry Professionals and Teen Leaders. Separate Teen Leader activities will bring youth representing all disciplines and horse breed activities together to learn team building, ethics and network. A preconference tour of the area will include horse farms of many disciplines.

Applications and additional brochures can be found at <http://www.animalscience.unl.edu/extension/equine.html>. More information on the symposium can be found at <http://www.ayhc.com/symposium.htm>

Fair Books Due to be Mailed by Mid-March

The 2009 Lancaster County Fair will be Aug. 5-9 at the Lancaster Event Center. Fair Books will be mailed to all 4-H families and previous Open Class exhibitors by mid-March. The 4-H portions of the Fair Book will be online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h> and Open Class portions will be at www.superfair.org

New in the 4-H areas this year are:

- Horse Hunter Show
- Hunter/Saddleseat Halter Show
- Llama/Alpaca Show
- Meat Goat Show
- Swine Breeding Gilt class and a Babe Contest

More information about 4-H changes will be published in upcoming NEBLINES.

Horse Expo, March 13-15

Nebraska's largest equine trade show and educational extravaganza will be held March 13-15 at the Lancaster Event Center. Featured clinicians include Richard Frake, Rob McNabb and Dianne Olds Rossi who is a connoisseur of educated dancing horses, or Haute d'Ecole (high school) horses. For more information and schedule, go to www.nebraskahorsecouncil.org.

4-H Volunteer Training Available to Check Out on DVD

This year's "Winter Warm-Up" 4-H volunteer training will be available via DVD. Topics include: "Communicating with Families", "Liveliest Livestock Meetings", "Importance of 4-H Volunteers", "It's Just Rocket Science", "State Fair Update" or "Investing in Youth". View one or all topics. Contact Tracy at 441-7180 to check out a DVD.

March

Jim Bauman

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Jim Bauman as winner of March's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Jim has volunteered for 4-H since his oldest daughter started 4-H nearly 20 years ago. He has helped members of the Flying Hoofs and Riding Wranglers 4-H clubs with horse, beef, swine, sheep and goat projects. He has also helped with fitting, selection and nutrition clinics.

"I liked watching the kids go through stages as they gained more knowledge, experience and confidence in their livestock endeavors through the years," Jim says. "My favorite experience as a 4-H volunteer was watching the many successes—along with some failures—my children had in 4-H."

Jim, his wife Cindy and their three children are all 4-H alumni. He is manager of the Farmers Cooperative Company Martell branch. He, his wife and his company sponsor numerous trophies for the animal shows at the Lancaster County Fair. He has served on the Lancaster County Ag Society board of directors. He is a life member of the American Quarter Horse Association and member of the Nebraska Cattlemen Association.

Congratulations to Jim. Volunteers like him are indeed the heart of 4-H!

Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu> or at the extension office. Nominations of co-volunteers welcome.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County

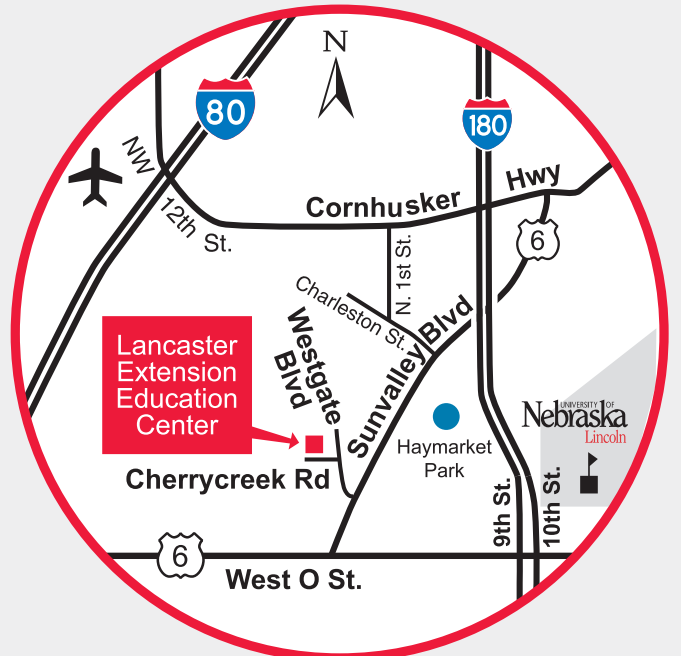
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

(402) 441-7180

<http://lancaster.unl.edu>

E-mail: lancaster@unl.edu • Fax: 441-7148

Lancaster Extension Education Center
Conference Facilities
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln



UNL Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture. We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act; for assistance contact UNL Extension in Lancaster County at 441-7180.

Extension Educator & Unit Leader Gary C. Bergman

Extension Educators

Lorene Bartos
Maureen Burson
Tom Dorn
Alice Henneman
Don Janssen
Barb Ogg
Karen Wobig

Extension Associates

Mary Abbott
Soni Cochran
Marty Cruickshank
Mary Jane Frogge
Deanna Karmazin
Tracy Kulm
Mardel Meinke
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THE NEBLINE

THE NEBLINE is published monthly (except December) and mailed to more than 11,000 households in Lancaster County.

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444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A • Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507

Embryology

continued from page 1

The lights are dimmed and students and teachers eagerly wait to see what's going on inside each egg. By using a special light, students and teachers can see inside the egg for the first time. For everyone in the room, this is one of the most exciting moments of the entire project.

At the end of the incubation period, about 21 days, the students watch for any signs of "pipping" (when the chick uses its egg tooth to break or chip through the shell). Once the eggs start to pip, the students anxiously check the incubator throughout the

day. Fortunately, most of the chicks will hatch just fine if they have pipped.

The newly-hatched chicks stay in the classroom where the students learn how to care for them. Children enjoy the chicks so much, they sometimes choose to stay in from recess or come to school early just to be with the new babies. After a couple of days, the chicks are picked up by extension staff and given to local farmers.

For more information on 4-H Embryology in Lancaster County, Nebraska, visit <http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/embryology>

4-H Embryology Web Site Gets Worldwide Attention

The 4-H Embryology Web site at <http://lanaster.unl.edu/4h/embryology> has gotten a lot of national and international attention.

Many educational sites have featured 4-H Embryology and 4-H EGG Cam, including: Mother Goose Time Preschool, goCyberCamp™, EarthCam Top Ten, SciLinks, American Library Association's Great Sites for Kids, Kim Komando Radio Show and more.

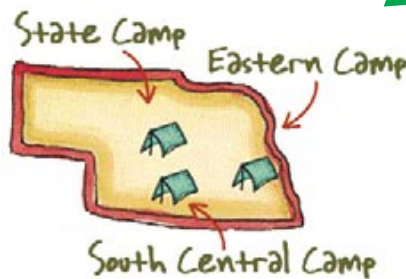
4-H EGG Cam photo resources have also been included in books by Hobby Farms, the National Science Resource Center (managed by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Academies) and even a Baby Einstein book. One photo researcher used photos in an interactive exhibit at the Science and Technology Museum in Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia.



Save 10% on 4-H Camps by Registering Before April 1!



Save 10% by registering before April 1!



4-H Summer Camps & Trips are open to all youth ages 5–19 — need not be in 4-H. Specializing in leadership development and team building, 4-H summer camps create positive memories which last a lifetime.

With three unique Nebraska locations at Halsey, Gretna and Alma, there are more than 40 camps ranging from half day to four days/three nights. Some camp sessions offer a range of activities while others focus on a specific theme. Most camps include one to four overnight stays in comfortable cabins. Six camps aimed at youth ages 5–8 are one-day camps and adult chaperones are invited!

UNL Extension, through its 4-H Youth Development Program, has been operating 4-H Camps for over 40 years. The 4-H camps and centers all meet over 300 standards established by the American Camping Association.

Since the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Camp near Gretna is closest to Lincoln, many Lancaster County youth attend camps there, however local youth also attend camps at the other two locations.

2009 4-H Summer Camp brochures have complete information and registration forms — available online at <http://4h.unl.edu/camp> or at the extension office.

Camp Counselors Needed

Youth ages 15–19 years are needed to volunteer to help children have the best summer of their lives while camping at Nebraska 4-H Camps and Centers. Camp Counselors develop leadership skills, self-confidence and independence! They meet friends which will last a lifetime, experience excitement, challenges and have FUN! You may apply to be a counselor at a variety of camps offered during the months of June, July and August. Information and application are available online at <http://4h.unl.edu/camp/staff/counseling.htm> or contact Tracy at 441-7180. Applications are due March 13. Applications received after the deadline may be accepted until all positions are filled. 4-H Council will reimburse Lancaster County youth the cost of the training. For LPS students who are still in school during the training, camps will work around your school schedule.

Cabin Mentors Needed

Cabin Mentors age 17 and older are needed at the 4-H Camps. Mentors have the opportunity to gain the skills and experience necessary for a future 4-H summer program staff position and provide overall night time cabin supervision. They support and mentor camp counselors and campers in meeting their responsibilities. They help develop a "team" atmosphere in their cabin and program group. Information and application are available online at <http://4h.unl.edu/camp/staff/mentors.htm> or contact Tracy at 441-7180. Applications are due March 13. Applications received after the deadline may be accepted until all positions are filled.

U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of Feb. 3, Lancaster County was not in drought conditions.



	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)				
	None	D0	D1	D2	D3
Current	89.5	10.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Last Week (2/17/2009 map)	89.5	10.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
3 Months Ago (11/11/2008 map)	90.7	9.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Calendar Year (1/1/2009 map)	89.8	10.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Start of Water Year (12/1/2008 map)	83.0	17.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One Year Ago (2/2/2008 map)	66.7	33.3	15.7	7.8	1.7

Intensity:
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Drought - Moderate
 D2 Drought - Severe
 D3 Drought - Extreme
 D4 Drought - Exceptional

For the most recent map, visit <http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm>

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Explore Career Options at Big Red Academic Camps

The 2009 Big Red Summer Academic Camps are a chance for high school youth to spend time investigating an interest or potential career, explore the UNL campus, meet people from across the state and have lots of fun. Held in June, Big Red Summer Academic Camps features 12 career exploration camps hosted by Nebraska 4-H and UNL faculty members. The camps are residence camps held on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. Housing and food are provided.

After spending several fun-filled days exploring a specific topic such as movie-making or food molecular biology, youth showcase their work at a special "capstone event" which family members are invited to attend. Brochures and registration forms are available at <http://bigredcamps.unl.edu> or at the extension office.

For more information, call 472-2805. 4-H members are encouraged to apply for a scholarship — application is on the Web site.

Save \$50 by registering before April 1!



Camp	Dates	Grade**
Our Changing Earth*	June 7-12	9-12
Child Development	June 7-12	9-12
Companion Animals*	June 7-12	9-12
Culinary Arts	June 7-12	9-12
Filmmaking	June 7-12	9-12
Food Molecular Biology	June 7-12	9-12
Spider Science	June 7-12	10-12
Theatre	June 7-12	9-12
Quilt Design	June 7-12	9-12
Unicameral Youth Conference	June 7-10	9-12
Veterinary Science*	June 7-12	9-12
Web Design and Animation	June 7-12	9-12

* New camp for 2009

**Grade for Fall '09. Students who graduate in May '09 are welcome to attend.

Can You Guess It?



Vicki Jedicke, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

Did you guess it? Find out at <http://lanaster.unl.edu>

Did you guess it from the February NEBLINE? The answer was Broccoli!